



# FOREWORD

I stumbled across this history after reading about garment manufacturing along the lower Main in the early 1900s, and wondering where all the workers had gone. I later traced them to the Mile End and Mile-Ex, and to the north, on Rue Chabanel. I casually surveyed my friends, and none were aware that these neighborhoods once housed the largest garment manufacturing industry in Canada.

Montreal's disused garment buildings were subject to a frenzy of investment, beginning in the mid-1990s. My sense is that in the process, the human history of garment work in the area was lost to the public. Absent this history, the only critical narrative in circulation is one of rising rents and the displacement of artists and small businesses. As a broke urban geography student living in the Mile End, this narrative speaks to me, but it's not the only one.

Lolo and I wanted to tell the story of garment deindustrialization in Montreal through people who lived it. To that end, most of the dialogue in **THIS FONT** was taken from interviews with Glen and Randy Rotchin, whose father and grandfather owned garment factories, and Fatima Rocchia, who worked in one of them. These narratives may seem in conflict, but "they convey different facets of the same [history] . . . like languages, they are irreducible to each other, yet translation is possible between them." \* The remainder of **THIS TEXT** (unless spoken by me or my rodent sidekick) was pulled from English and French newspaper accounts, video footage, and from an old box of personal papers generously loaned to me by Fatima. Visually, Lolo and I used photographs and video to recreate characters and settings, defaulting to imagination where these were unavailable. The notes at the end of each chapter contain a full list of source material as it appears.

As much as we strove for historical accuracy, this account remains stubbornly subjective. Just like a piece of factory-produced clothing conceals many labouring hands, these narratives passed through many stages of subjective interpretation and representation before arriving at the page. Though we tried to let the interviews stand on their own as much as possible, Lolo and I had a heavy hand in this process and our political agenda shouldn't be hard to detect. At the end of the day, this is a story about feminist, immigrant, working class struggle. It's designed to stir up your political imagination and we hope it does just that.

---

\*Alain Supiot, *Homo Juridicus: On the Anthropological Function of the Law* (London: Verso, 2007), 204.



# ***CONTENTS***

***1*** THERE GOES THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

***2*** INTO THE FACTORY

***3*** ALL THAT IS SOLID MELTS INTO AIR

***4*** ALL SEWN UP?

***5*** BRASSAIT DE LA MERDE

***6*** STRIKE OF PRIDE

***~*** LOOSE ENDS



***1.***

***THERE GOES  
THE NEIGHBOURHOOD***



\* I have a hard time believing it myself but this actually happened.

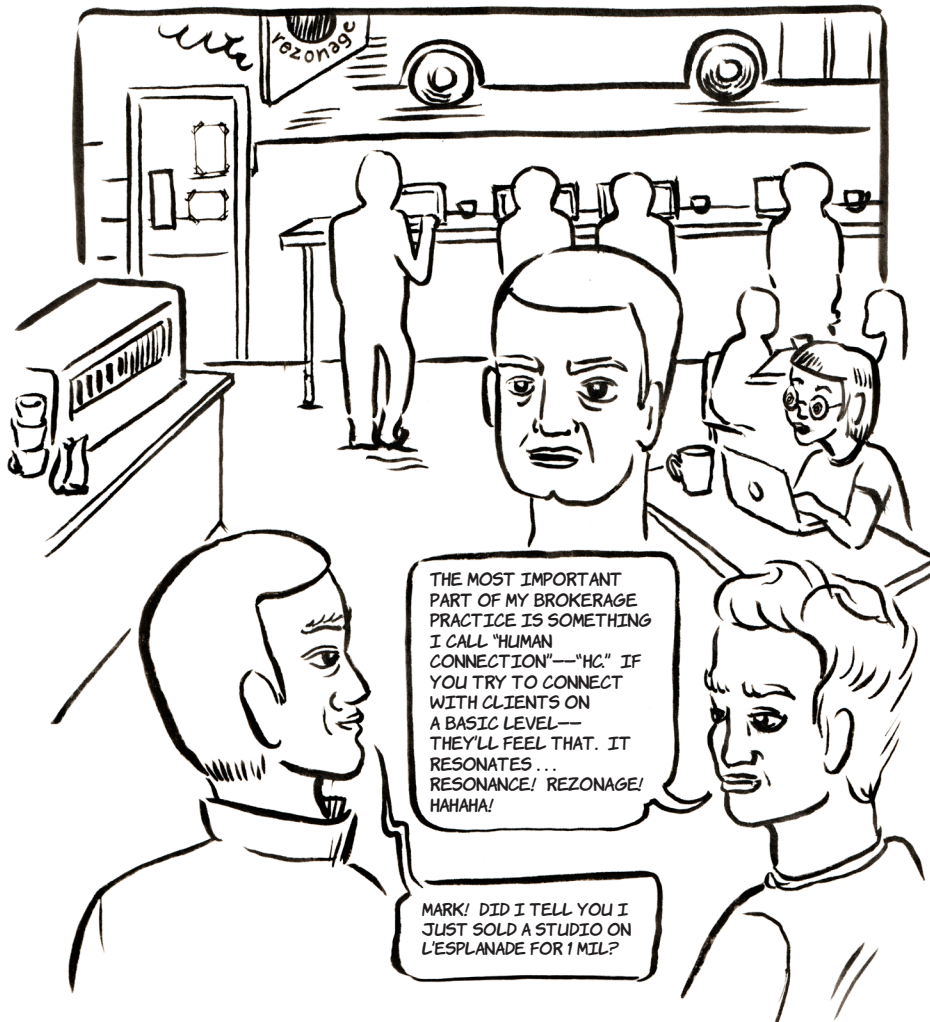
WHAT IS GOING ON WITH THE MILE  
END LATELY? I FEEL LIKE I'M TRAPPED  
INSIDE A VOGUE TRAVEL SPREAD.

IT'S GREAT, ISN'T IT? ALL THESE NICE WARM  
YOGA STUDIOS ... I COULD DO WITH ANOTHER  
ARTISANAL CHEESE SHOP THOUGH. OR IO. SHAME  
ALL THE NEW LANDLORDS ARE SO VIGILANT—  
I'M RUNNING OUT OF PLACES TO HIDE!



THERE GOES THE CUTE LITTLE BOOK STORE ...





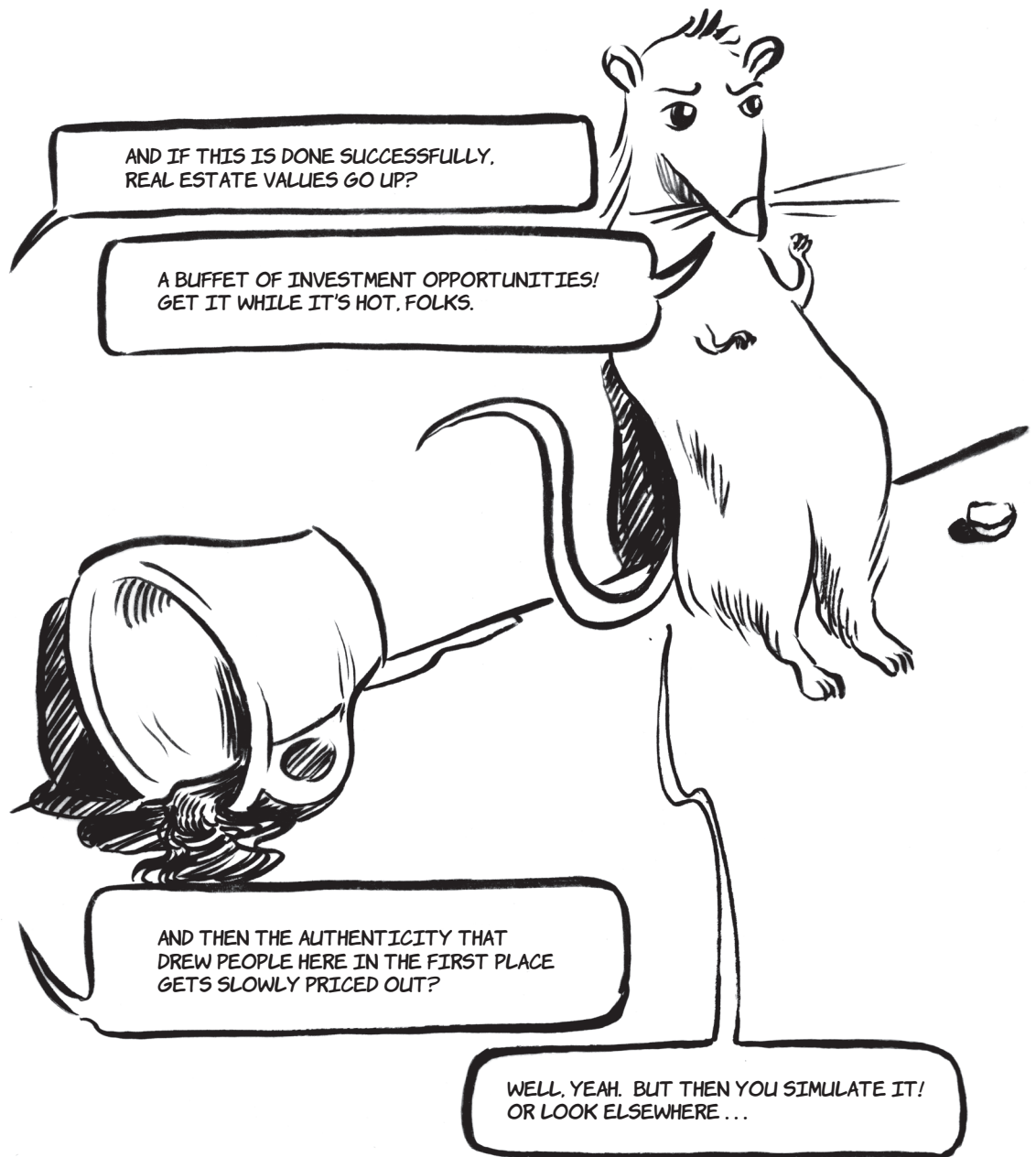
THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF MY BROKERAGE PRACTICE IS SOMETHING I CALL "HUMAN CONNECTION"—"HC." IF YOU TRY TO CONNECT WITH CLIENTS ON A BASIC LEVEL—THEY'LL FEEL THAT. IT RESONATES... RESONANCE! REZONAGE! HAHHAHA!

MARK! DID I TELL YOU I JUST SOLD A STUDIO ON L'ESPLANADE FOR 1 MIL?

WHY DO I FEEL LIKE THE SAME PEOPLE THAT COME HERE TO CONSUME CULTURAL AUTHENTICITY END UP FLATTENING IT INTO A CULTURAL WASTELAND? WHAT THE HECK DOES AUTHENTICITY EVEN MEAN IN THIS CONTEXT?



FROM A MARKETING PERSPECTIVE, "A CITY IS AUTHENTIC IF IT CAN CREATE THE EXPERIENCE OF ORIGINS. THIS IS DONE BY PRESERVING HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND DISTRICTS, ENCOURAGING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL SCALE BOUTIQUES AND CAFES, AND BRANDING NEIGHBORHOODS IN TERMS OF DISTINCTIVE CULTURAL IDENTITIES." (1)



AND IF THIS IS DONE SUCCESSFULLY,  
REAL ESTATE VALUES GO UP?

A BUFFET OF INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES!  
GET IT WHILE IT'S HOT, FOLKS.

AND THEN THE AUTHENTICITY THAT  
DREW PEOPLE HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE  
GETS SLOWLY PRICED OUT?

WELL, YEAH. BUT THEN YOU SIMULATE IT!  
OR LOOK ELSEWHERE ...

In the mid-1990s, Montreal aggressively courted the big French gaming company Ubisoft, luring it to the old factory building where it stands today. In 2009, chuffed by the success of this strategy, the city allocated a combined \$9 million to attract more investment to the Mile End's disused manufacturing spaces. (2) At the time, there was some concern over what this would mean for artists and existing residents.

## 2020



THE MILE END IS NOW A JANE JACOBS DAYDREAM, ITS OLD TEXTILE BUILDINGS, A CORNUCOPIA OF MIXED USE, BUT EVEN THE CBC WORRIES THAT THE INFLUX OF MONEY "HAS ALTERED THE CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD." (3)



1990's



THE LOCAL BOROUGH IS WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE ARTISTS AND THE PEOPLE IN MILE END TO MAKE SURE THEIR NEEDS ARE CONSIDERED. THE PLATEAU IS A BEEHIVE OF ACTIVITY. IT'S HOME TO ONE OF THE LARGEST CONCENTRATIONS OF ARTISTS IN MONTREAL. SO WITH THAT IN MIND, THE INTENT IS TO MAKE SURE WE CAN BALANCE THAT WITH THE ULTIMATE REVITALIZATION OF THE AREA. THE CITY IS TAKING A CALCULATED RISK IN INVESTING IN EXPROPRIATION AND NEW INFRASTRUCTURES. BUT WE THINK IT'S A RISK WELL WORTH TAKING BECAUSE OF THE NEW TENANTS AND BUSINESSES COMING TO THE AREA AS WELL AS THE INCREASED PROPERTY VALUES. (4)\*

ACCORDING TO URBAN SOCIOLOGIST SHARON ZUKIN, "REINVENTING A NEIGHBORHOOD'S AUTHENTICITY SERVES MAINLY TO ESTABLISH THE MARKET VALUE OF ITS BUILDINGS AND LOCATION, EVEN AT THE COST OF PREVENTING ARTISTS, RESIDENTS, AND SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS FROM PUTTING DOWN ROOTS." IN OTHER WORDS, THESE APPROACHES TO URBAN PLANNING "ENCOURAGE MIXED USES, BUT NOT A MIXED POPULATION" (6)

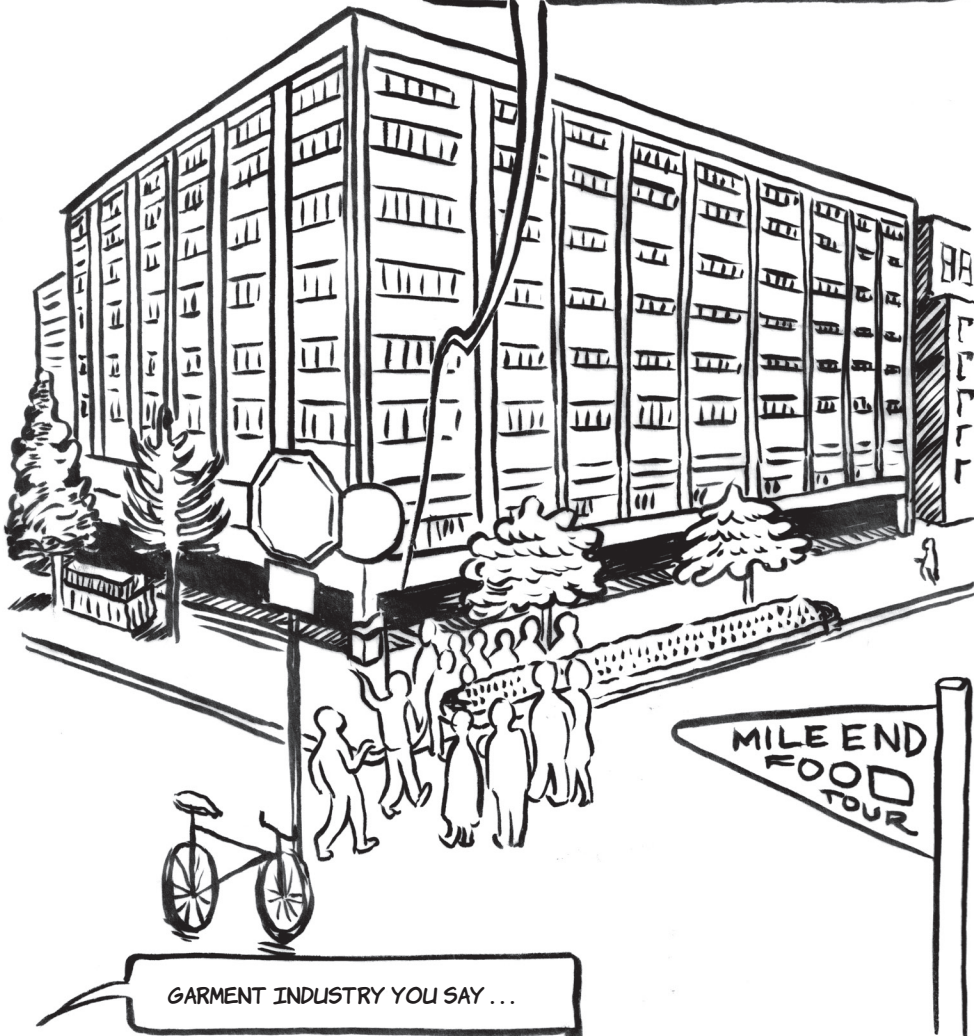


\*"Gentrification' as a concept and a political rallying cry has in many places been swept away by an alliterative garble of revitalisation, renaissance, regeneration, renewal, redevelopment, rejuvenation, restructuring, resurgence, reurbanisation and residentialisation—terms that bolster a neoliberal narrative of competitive progress that carves the path for ever more stealth forms of gentrification." (5)



It's important to note here that gentrification conceals not one but multiple layers of displacement, extending a long history of predatory land acquisition and violent dispossession under settler colonialism in Canada and beyond. Neighbourhood transformations such as those underway in Pointe Saint Charles and Parc-Extension "fit neatly into the trajectory of settler colonialism, supported in the first instance by terra nullis (empty land) and frontier mythologies, all leading toward a sense of finality or transcendence of the colonial form when the land has been developed beyond recognition as something that indigenous people could claim." (7) As notions of prior claim become muddled, the question becomes "Who belongs? Who has the right to remain? Whose history matters?" (8)

OK FOLKS! HERE WE HAVE THE GREEN PRANCER  
—GREAT FALAFEL. THIS IS WHERE ARCADE FIRE  
RECORDED THEIR FIRST ALBUM! THIS USED  
TO BE A GARMENT DISTRICT—THAT'S WHY  
YOU HAVE THESE HUGE FACTORY BUILDINGS.  
EVERYTHING WAS ABANDONED IN THE 1990S,  
WHEN THE INDUSTRY COLLAPSED, BUT THEN  
YOU HAD COOL ARTIST TYPES COMING IN AND  
CONVERTING THE OLD FACTORY SPACES INTO  
LOFTS AND JAM SPACES AND ART STUDIOS. THE  
MILE END BECAME THE EPICENTER OF COOL!



GARMENT INDUSTRY YOU SAY ...

## ***NOTES***

- (1) Sharon Zukin, *Naked City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3.
- (2) Christopher DeWolf, “New life for a garment district,” *Urban Photo*, July 4, 2008.
- (3) Stephen Smith, “Ubisoft at 20: It’s changed Mile End, but for the better?” *CBC News*, June 2, 2017.
- (4) Economic development officer Alan DeSousa quoted in DeWolf, “New life for a garment district.”
- (5) Tom Slater, “Missing Marcuse: On gentrification and displacement,” *City* 13, no. 2 (June 2009): 294.
- (6) Zukin, *Naked City*, 242; 25.
- (7) Adam Barker, Toby Rollo, and Emma Battell Lowman, “Settler Colonialism and the Consolidation of Canada in the Twentieth Century,” in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, eds. Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Routledge, 2016): 159.
- (8) Fred Burrill, “Thesis Proposal: Heritages of Struggle and Dispossession in Saint-Henri, 1970-2018,” (PhD diss. proposal, Concordia University, 2018), 2.





## 2.

### ***INTO THE FACTORY***

*"Individually these women bore an aura of vulnerability, even shyness . . . [but] as a group they could be a formidable sight." When a lone man embarked on a bus full of maquila workers, "he was immediately subjected to verbal attacks similar to those women sometimes experience from men. They chided and they teased him, feeling protected by anonymity and by their numerical strength."*

– Maria Patricia Fernandez-Kelly quoted in Jefferson Cowie, *Capital Moves* (1)

*When the union began organizing, I can't say I was overly enthusiastic. Like most girls in the shops, I was suspicious, confused. After all, which of us knew the meaning of a union? To sign up with the union meant to be a pioneer and most people aren't interested in pioneering—particularly if it might cost them their bread and butter.*

– Yvette Charpentier of Quebec ILGWU Local 262 (2)



Fig. 1 Making Eaton Brand clothing, 1912 (T. Eaton Historical Photograph Collection, Archives of Ontario. In *Angels of the Workplace: Women and the Construction of Gender Relations in the Canadian Clothing Industry, 1890-1940*. By Mercedes Steedman. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008, 13.)

## Industrialization

Montreal's garment industry was the largest in Canada until most of its factories closed or relocated in the 1980s and 1990s. It has a long and lively history. Until the early 1900s, Jewish and Italian immigrants dominated the clothing and textile trades. Much of this activity was centered on Montreal's lower "Main."<sup>\*</sup> As early as 1891, women outnumbered men. (3) New to Montreal and limited by language and cultural differences, immigrant women gravitated toward trades already earmarked by their compatriots. (4) These women were a gift to the industry in the form of a cheap, elastic labour force. (5) Women could always be paid less.


IN CASE YOU WERE ASLEEP IN MARXIST FEMINISM 101: CAPITALISM EMERGED WITHIN AN EXISTING CONTEXT OF PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY, AND THE TWO HAVE BEEN FILTHY NASTY LOVERS EVER SINCE. CAPITALIST STRUCTURES HAVE BEEN VERY CLEVER ABOUT REPURPOSING EXISTING SOCIAL INEQUALITIES. (6) ONE EXAMPLE IS GENDERED PAY. IN THE GARMENT INDUSTRY, THIS WAS NATURALIZED BY WOMEN'S PORTRAYAL AS DEPENDENTS AND DOMESTIC CREATURES, BUT ALSO BY SOCIAL DEFINITIONS OF SKILL. FOR THE MOST PART, WOMEN WERE EXCLUDED FROM WORK DEFINED AS SKILLED. (7) AT THE SAME TIME, SKILLED WORK THAT CAME TO BE DONE BY WOMEN COULD LATER BE REDEFINED AS UNSKILLED. (8) DIVIDING A WORKFORCE IS THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT SOLIDARITY!

The arrival of the home sewing machine in 1889 made it possible to separate cutting from sewing, breaking down traditional labour processes. (9) This allowed many more women to work from home. The availability of an invisible and atomized workforce created intense competition, driving production costs way down. (10) But the growth of the ready-made clothing market after 1890 shifted the scale around homework. Employers were suddenly unable to meet demand. (12) Beat out by the efficiencies of factory labour, the use of homeworkers went into slow decline. (13)

The expansion of ready-made clothing production after 1900 shifted many female homeworkers onto the factory floor and consolidated the lower Main as a vibrant manufacturing hub. (14) Spatial centralization, however, did not create order. Large garment shops existed but smaller ones predominated, and competition between them was ruthless.\*\*

<sup>\*</sup>A popular term for Saint Laurent Boulevard.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Neither was it a total shift: "Custom work, homework, and factory work all flourished at the same time, each holding prominence in specific sectors of the trade." (15)



PRODUCTION COSTS WERE REDUCED EVEN FURTHER BY A PRACTICE OF FINING HOMEWORKERS FOR IMPERFECT WORK AND BY MAKING THEM PAY FOR THREAD, SCISSORS, LIGHTING, FUEL, AND OTHER EXPENSES INCURRED IN THEIR OWN HOMES. (11) PEOPLE TALK ABOUT THE GIG ECONOMY LIKE IT'S A RECENT INVENTION!

## SWEATSHOPS!

Alongside them proliferated a satellite system of contract shops. This was a handy alternative to the homework system because it allowed manufacturers to shift labour costs elsewhere without losing control of production. (16) The pesky burden of exploiting workers now fell to the contractors. The sweatshop system soon became entrenched and “by the 1920s perhaps a third of the clothing industry workforce was hidden away in contract shops.” (17) Like homework, it relied on cheap and flexible female labour to hasten a race to the bottom. But with short-term profits came chaos and uncertainty. (18) By the 1920s, manufacturers feared the monster they had created. The use of both homework and contract work ebbed. (19)

This process was helped along by labour unions and middle-class social reformers, who framed homework and sweatshop labour as a threat to family life and an affront to feminine virtue. (20) The moral panic they whipped up cast a brief spotlight on female garment workers. But this public attention was a double-edged sword—whether for moral or political reasons, both parties sought to protect helpless women workers by limiting their employment in the first place. (21) This first major intervention into the garment industry set the tone for later ones to come.

Capital investment poured in. (22) Weirdly, the consolidation and stabilization of the industry under these combined pressures was also a process of social stratification. Job categories multiplied as technology advanced and “By the 1920s ... each one of the new jobs had a wage, a task, and a gender.” (23)

THIS JOB TAXONOMY WAS IN CONSTANT FLUX! WHEN THE SEWING MACHINE WAS INTRODUCED, “IT WAS INITIALLY SEEN AS A MAN’S MACHINE, RESULTING IN A HIGHER STATUS MALE LABOUR. WHEN THE MACHINES CAME INTO REGULAR USE IN THE FACTORIES THEIR OPERATION GRADUALLY SHIFTED FROM MEN TO WOMEN” (24)

This kaleidoscope of job classifications and skill designations may have had a certain appeal. While a gender division of labour was baked into the industry from the start, its anarchic labour market “created a situation of fluidity and ambiguity rather than a fixed dead-end place for female wage earners.” (25) At the same

time, large factories offered a very different social context than the small shops, and with it, a certain kind of freedom. Here, young women could choose from a wider range of jobs and patriarchal control, still administered from above, was at least formalized and impersonal. (26)\*

---

\*Jefferson Cowie finds a similar trade-off in the American electrical industry, which employed many women. While it’s true that leaving the home for the factory meant exchanging one form of patriarchal control for another, “the incorporation of women into wage work also presented the mechanisms for small but important transformations in patriarchy itself. As women entered the factories, the blurring of gender roles broadened the range of behaviors available to both men and women, and money of their own—however limited—gave women increasing freedom to question the domestic division of labor.” (27)



## Unionization

"THE MODERN FACTORY OFFERED IMMIGRANT WOMEN A COMMUNITY AMONG WOMEN, A CHANCE TO LEARN THE WAYS OF A NEW WORLD." (28) THAT'S WHAT CITY LIFE IS ALL ABOUT!

With the expansion of industry after 1900 came the expansion of industrial unions. The International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) and United Garment Workers of America (UGWA) both launched in the US and then moved north to establish themselves in Canada alongside the small craft unions. (29) By 1904, ILGWU had set up several small locals in Montreal made up of skilled male workers. (30) Both unions relied on public legitimation through branding more than militancy. (31)

Trade union activity began to pick up speed in the 1920s. Early strikes were mostly around wage cuts and restructuring. (32) A welcome presence at strike time, when bodies were needed on the picket line, women had no real place in the union structure, let alone the negotiating table. (33) By default, garment unions reflected the interests of the male trade unionists who led them. Until at least the 1920s, the Montreal ILGWU was led by Jewish socialists, and their "organizations and newspapers ... provided a fertile base for union organizing." (35) At the same time, the garment workforce was increasingly comprised of rural French-Canadian women, "for whom the tightly knit ethnic community and its labour activism were an anathema." (36)

BECAUSE THEY WORKED DIFFERENT JOBS FOR DIFFERENT PAY, MEN'S AND WOMEN'S INTERESTS DID NOT IMMEDIATELY COINCIDE. FOR MEN'S WORK TO RETAIN ITS RELATIVE STATUS, WOMEN'S WORK HAD TO REMAIN CHEAP. AT THE SAME TIME, CHEAP FEMALE LABOUR WAS A MAJOR THREAT TO MEN'S WAGES. THIS CATCH 22 HALTED GARMENT LABOUR MOVEMENTS FROM THE BEGINNING.\*



Fig. 2 Women doing hand work on men's suits in Eaton's factory, circa 1904 (T. Eaton Historical Photograph Collection, Archives of Ontario. In *Angels of the Workplace*. By Mercedes Steedman. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008, 34.

\*Early attempts to deal with this problem were framed around the defence of the traditional working-class family. Skilled male workers "often justified their demands for higher wages by suggesting that if they were paid properly, women would not have to leave home in the first place." (34)

\*The ILGWU did not have a French speaker on its staff until 1937. (40)

\*\*Several labour historians have described the “self-fulfilling prophecy” of women workers’ historically restricted union involvement, where, fighting hostility from both male employers and male trade unionists, “resources became doubly exhausted.” (45)

Despite their numerical strength, these women were at the bottom of the industrial food chain. (37) These ethnic, gender, and linguistic divisions were a terminal nuisance for union organizers.

The “problem” of organizing French Canadian women was both real and self-fulfilling. Young and new to city life, these women tended to be closely tied to the Catholic church and unfamiliar with union culture. (38) Most saw industrial work as a waystation to marriage and motherhood. But the bigger issue was with the union itself: a majority in the garment workforce, French Canadian women—and women generally—were unrepresented on union staff. (39) There was no one to speak their language, let alone voice their concerns.\* The ILGWU’s status as a foreign import also made it vulnerable to attack. Anti-union forces in the media and the Catholic church mobilized anti-Semitism to sow mistrust and deepen the rift between Jewish and French Canadian workers. (41) At the same time, the real challenge of organizing a divided workforce on foreign soil justified the union’s minimal effort to do so in the first place. (42) In this way, “unorganisable” women became an excellent scapegoat for strategic failure and organizational complacency.

MEANWHILE, THESE SOCIAL DIVISIONS WERE GREAT FOR BUSINESS!

In most ways, the Montreal ILGWU replicated the traditional hierarchies of the workplace. (43) Off the picket line, women were absent from the political life of an industry they dominated. This struck few as odd at the time. For one thing, the ILGWU steered clear of the dress sector, in which women were the vast majority, until the mid-1930s, which spared them from having to address women’s concerns. More generally, “gender inequality was simply the normal state of affairs—so taken for granted that it was hidden away from the consciousness of the day.” (44)\*\* When the Industrial Union of Needle Trades Workers (IUNTW), a left-wing union affiliated with the Canadian Communist Party, moved in on the dress sector, the ILGWU was forced into action. These competing visions created an opening for female participation in union life. Against a backdrop of female exclusion, exceptions like these reveal a great deal about what could have been.

The 1920s and early 1930s saw a flowering of communist-led labour activism in Canada at a time when the women’s clothing sector was still a no man’s land of union organizing. (46)

A RAT KING OF LANGUAGE, ETHNIC, GENDER, AND CRAFT ALLIANCES. “THE UNDERPAID, OVERCROWDED, AND OVERWHELMINGLY PATRIARCHAL DRESS TRADE REPRESENTED LABOUR’S MOST INTRACTABLE PROBLEM.” (47)



With a mandate to organize the unorganized, IUNTW took the plunge. It became "the first union to successfully organize large numbers of women workers in the trade." (48) Part of its success had to do with its democratic, shop-floor approach, which allowed it to see and address women's day-to-day concerns. (49) Dress sector work in particular "was characterized by low wages, piecework, little sectioning of work, speed-up, arbitrary distribution of work, and long hours, all of which made for tension and short tempers." (50) Communist-led unions believed in bottom-up organizing, and women happened to be at the bottom.

HERE'S JOSHUA GERSHMAN, NATIONAL ORGANIZER FOR IUNTW TO EXPLAIN HOW THIS WORKED: "THE SHOP COMMITTEE WAS THE BASIS OF OUR ORGANIZATION. THIS WAS THE MEDIUM THROUGH WHICH WE REACHED OUT TO THE WOMEN. WE GAVE THEM THE INITIATIVE IN FORMING THE UNION. WHEN EVERYONE IN THE SHOP HAD JOINED OUR UNION WE CALLED A SHOP MEETING. WE HAD A SHOP COMMITTEE ELECTED. THEN OUR EXECUTIVE OF THE UNION WERE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE SHOPS. THE SHOPS ELECTED SHOP CHAIRLADIES AND GRIEVANCES WERE REPORTED TO HER. THEN SHE REPORTED IT TO THE UNION." (51)

IUNTW's brief success ushered in a period of intense inter- and intra-union struggle, to the delight of manufacturers. Even amidst a turf war, the ILGWU put off organizing the dress sector until 1936. (52) IUNTW faced muscular opposition from both ILGWU and manufacturers, for whom ILGWU was the lesser evil. (53) These forces worked to discredit their common foe. After a major strike defeat in 1934, the IUNTW was disbanded and its members forced to join the ILGWU.\*

With IUNTW out of the way, the ILGWU was able to capitalize on the political culture already built up among the dress sector women. Harnessing this militancy, they led successful strikes in 1937 and 1940. These secured important victories, but were swiftly followed up with anti-communist purges. Leading organizers Rose Pesotta and Lea Roback, both indispensable to the strikes, were later marginalized. (57) The democracy and militancy so useful at strike time was put to bed.\*\*

ACCORDING TO GERSHMAN, "EVERY MEMBER OF THE IUNTW WHO WENT BACK INTO THE ILGWU COULDN'T FIND WORK BECAUSE THE BOSSES KNEW THEY WERE COMMUNISTS." (55)

LEA ROBACK RECOUNTS: "THE ILGWU CAME IN, IT TOOK OVER FROM THE WORKERS' UNITY LEAGUE [IUNTW] AND ALTHOUGH THE [IUNTW] DIDN'T WIN THE STRIKE, AS ONE CONSIDERS IT, BUT THEY DID WIN SOMETHING. THE WORKERS HAD DEVELOPED A MILITANCY THAT THEY DIDN'T KNOW EXISTED. FOR THE FIRST TIME, THERE WAS THIS MILITANCY OF THE FRENCH GIRLS. IN SPITE OF THE FACT THE CLERGY HAD ALL GONE OUT WITH SPEECHES AND THE CHURCH TO CONVINCE GIRLS NOT TO JOIN THE UNION." (56)

\*The ILGWU was also up against the homegrown Catholic unions mentioned earlier. They lured dress manufacturers with their virulent anti-communism only to be dropped later by Jewish employers who couldn't quite stomach their blatant anti-Semitism. (54)

\*\*According to Steedman and others, "members who criticized the ILGWU were labelled Communists and expelled from the union." (58) These purges are celebrated in a collection of commemorative essays published by the Montreal ILGWU on its 25th anniversary. Then-leader Bernard Shane recounts: "It became clear now that the communists must be made powerless if the midnettes were to have a union. The communists had been discredited because everyone knew their aim was not to build but to destroy." (59)



\*Officially the Select Committee on Price Spreads and Mass Buying, this was a study commissioned by the federal government to study trade practices in manufacturing. (60)

\*\*Amid concern over competition from cheaper female labour, "laws touching on the role of women workers in Canada had a dual rationale: to protect women and children from harmful conditions in the shops and factories; and to control and limit their workplace activity." (68)

The ILGWU was helped in its efforts by the post-Depression political climate—one of social and economic reform. Canada's international garment unions seized on this mood to press for greater scrutiny of the garment industry, bringing it to the attention of the 1934 Steven's Commission.\* Their findings brought the garment trade back into the public spotlight, this time as an object lesson on capitalism run amok. (61) This, combined with "the push to provide Canadian workers with a New Deal, resulted in provincial legislation that regulated hours and wages in the clothing industry in Quebec and Ontario" (62). The Collective Labour Agreements Extension Act (or Arcand Act), passed in Quebec in 1934, enshrined a new labour system of collective bargaining combined with state regulation.

**ILGWU MEMBERSHIP  
EXPANDED EIGHTFOLD  
BETWEEN 1932 AND 1934! (63)**

This Canadian spin on the New Deal granted unions new legitimacy and ushered in an era of relative peace and stability in the garment industry. But this pact was another double-edged sword, particularly for women workers. It moved decision-making "further

from the shop floor, the place where women gathered in the greatest number and had at least a minimal political voice." (64) These same decisions "crystallized divisions between workers on the basis of gender, length of experience, skill, and geographical location." (65) Politically and symbolically, it shifted the source of union legitimacy from the collective power of its workers to legal rights handed down by the state—it neutered the strike weapon. (66) The price of security was the further distancing of the ILGWU's female democratic base from the negotiating table.

**"TRADE UNIONS HAVE THEIR OWN BUILT-IN CONTRADICTIONS. WHILE THEY SERVE TO ORGANIZE WORKERS TO OBTAIN BARGAINING POWER OVER WAGES AND WORK CONDITIONS, FOR INSTANCE, THEY CAN ALSO FUNCTION POLITICALLY TO CONTAIN DISSSENT AMONG THEIR MEMBERS AND TO SOLIDIFY WORKERS' ACCEPTANCE OF THEIR SUBORDINATE POSITION AS A CLASS." (67)**

Government intervention in Montreal's garment industry echoed earlier attempts by trade unions and social reformers to protect women from work by highlighting the special vulnerability of women and children.\*\* Gendered labour laws "both protected women from some of the harsh effects of industrial life and ensured their separateness in the workplace." (69) This legal partition of the workforce



came “at a time when the number of skilled jobs was declining and the resulting homogenization ... threatened to lead to developing class consciousness and thence to class conflict.” (70) As well, manufacturers were skilled at evading labour regulations, which were often poorly enforced in the first place. (71) This meant that the formal paternalistic protection on which women workers were now dependent was mostly theoretical.

Prior to unionization and regulation, Montreal’s cheaper labour environment had been steadily sucking jobs from Toronto’s garment industry. By 1936, its dress sector dwarfed Toronto’s.\* This new system of bargaining and regulation suited the ILGWU’s business unionism fine.

Neither was it hostile to manufacturers—it offered them insulation from labour militancy even as they continued to benefit from a stratified labour force.\*\* After 1940, there was a sense that stability had been achieved and that strikes were a thing of the past. Montreal’s garment industry boomed.

STEEDMAN DESCRIBES THIS AS  
“A VIEW OF THE NEEDLE TRADES  
AS A COMMUNITY OF INTEREST  
BETWEEN WORKERS AND BOSSES  
RATHER THAN CLASS ADVERSARIES.”  
(73)

\*By 1940, Montreal’s garment workforce outnumbered Toronto’s 13,357 to 4,986. (72) This transfer continued after 1940 due to variations in provincial labour laws.

\*\*Interestingly, these ethnic and gender divisions are the only historical constant in an extremely volatile industry marked by “continuing, major economic restructuring.” (74)



Fig. 3 Rose Dress on strike in Montreal, circa 1937. Sally St. Aubin, shop chairlady, walks with other members of Local 262 (ILGWU Archive, Kheel Center for Labour-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University. In *Angels of the Workplace*. By Mercedes Steedman. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008, cover photo.)

## NOTES

- (1) Jefferson Cowie, *Capital Moves*: RCA's *Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 196.
- (2) Mercedes Steedman, *Angels of the Workplace: Women and the Construction of Gender Relations in the Canadian Clothing Industry, 1890-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 219.
- (3) Julie Podmore, "St. Lawrence Blvd. as 'Third City': Place, gender and difference along Montreal's 'Main'" (PhD diss., McGill University, 1999), 103.
- (4) Steedman, *Angels*, 21.
- (5) Ibid., 15.
- (6) Robert McIntosh, "Sweated Labour: Female Needleworkers in Industrializing Canada," *Labour / Le Travail* 32 (Fall 1993): 106.
- (7) Steedman, *Angels*, 15.
- (8) Ibid., 52.
- (9) Ibid., 28.
- (10) Ibid.
- (11) Ibid.
- (12) Ibid., 29.
- (13) Laura Climenko Johnson, *The Seam Allowance: Industrial Home Sewing in Canada* (Toronto: Women's Educational Press, 1982), 44.
- (14) Podmore, "St. Lawrence Blvd. as 'Third City,'" 105.
- (15) Steedman, *Angels*, 23.
- (16) Ibid., 29.
- (17) Ibid., 30.
- (18) Ibid., 32-3.
- (19) Johnson, *The Seam Allowance*, 48.
- (20) Ibid., 48; Steedman, *Angels*, 33, 37, 72; Podmore, "St. Lawrence Blvd. as 'Third City,'" 117.
- (21) Steedman, *Angels*, 40, 72.
- (22) Ibid., 41.
- (23) Ibid., 45.
- (24) Ibid., 47.
- (25) Ibid., 35.
- (26) Ibid., 55.
- (27) Cowie, *Capital Moves*, 196.
- (28) Steedman, *Angels*, 55.
- (29) Steedman, *Angels*, 59-61.
- (30) Ibid., 61.
- (31) Ibid.
- (32) Ibid., 57.
- (33) Ibid.
- (34) Ibid., 40.
- (35) Ibid., 64.
- (36) Ibid., 22.

- (37) Ibid., 18; Mercedes Steedman, "The Promise: Communist Organizing in the Needle Trades, the Dressmakers' Campaign, 1928-1937," *Labour/Le Travail* 34 (Fall 1994): 64.
- (38) Steedman, *Angels*, 17, 22; Steedman, *The Promise*, 64.
- (39) Steedman, *Angels*, 87, 217.
- (40) Ibid., 246.
- (41) Ibid., 66-7, 245.
- (42) Ibid., 100.
- (43) Ibid., 75.
- (44) Ibid., 237.
- (45) Anna Pollert, *Girls, Wives, Factory Lives* (London: Macmillan, 1981), 180.
- (46) Steedman, *Angels*, 129-33.
- (47) Ibid., 170.
- (48) Ibid., 150.
- (49) Ibid., 179.
- (50) Ibid., 149.
- (51) Steedman, *The Promise*, 64.
- (52) Steedman, *Angels*, 245-6.
- (53) Ibid., 175
- (54) Ibid., 249.
- (55) Joshua Gershman quoted in Steedman, "The Promise," 68.
- (56) Ibid., 176.
- (57) Carla Lipsig-Mummé, "Organizing Women in the Clothing Trades: Homework and the 1983 Garment Strike in Canada," *Studies in Political Economy* 22 (Spring 1987): 57.
- (58) Steedman, "The Promise," 69.
- (59) Bernard Shane, "Great Moments," in *Les / The Midinettes: 1937/1962*, ed. Edward Bantey (Montreal: Montreal Joint Board, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, 1962), 121.
- (60) Steedman, *Angels*, 161.
- (61) Ibid., 163.
- (62) Ibid., 197.
- (63) Ibid., 196.
- (64) Ibid., 191.
- (65) Ibid., 211.
- (66) Ibid., 191.
- (67) Ibid., 192.
- (68) Ibid., 199.
- (69) Ibid., 204.
- (70) Ibid., 205.
- (71) Ibid., 202.
- (72) Steedman, "The Promise," 40.
- (73) Steedman, *Angels*, 107.
- (74) Ibid., 257.

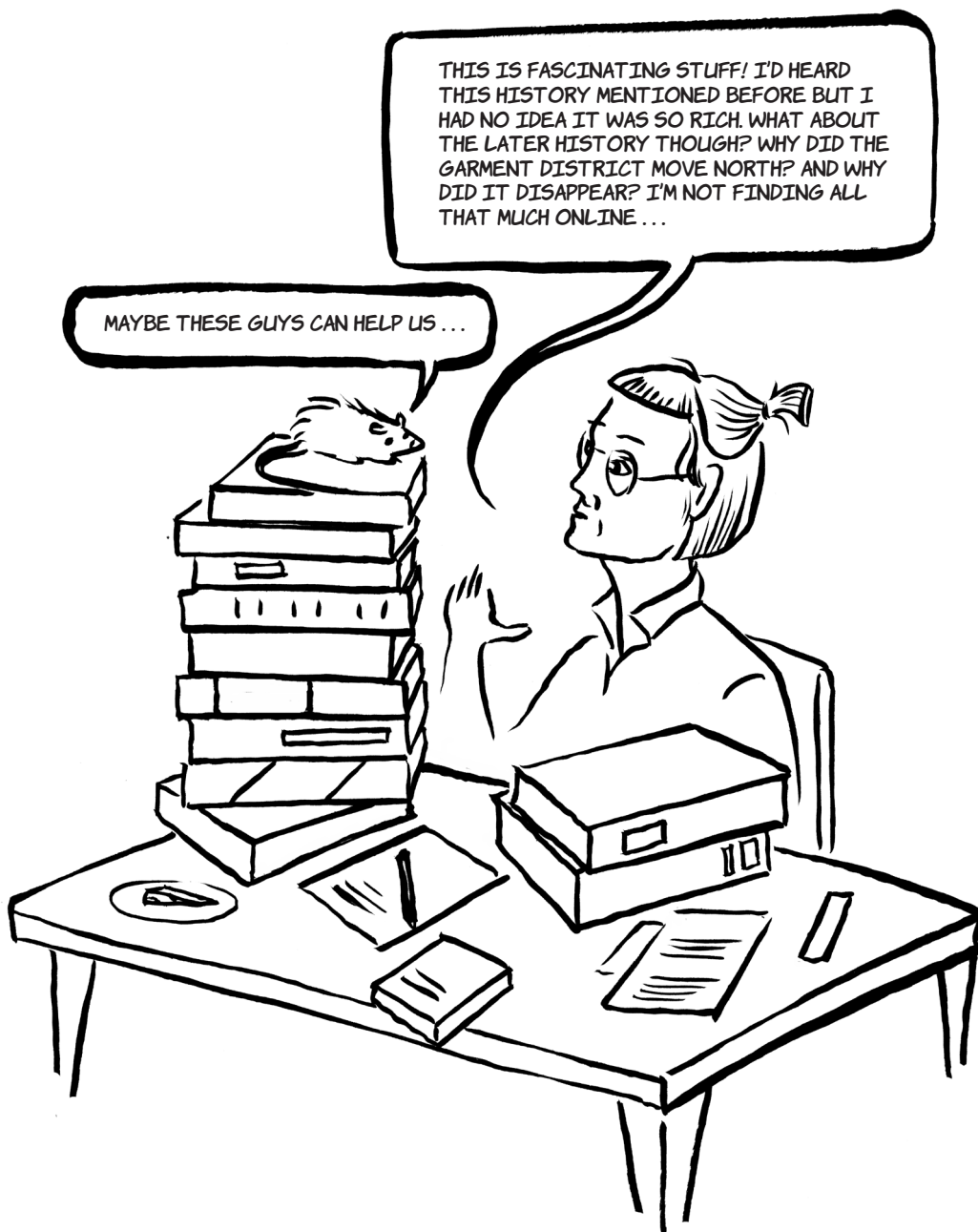
### **3.**

## ***ALL THAT IS SOLID MELTS INTO AIR***

*Imagine a wondrous new machine, strong and supple, a machine that reaps as it destroys. It is huge and mobile, something like the machines of modern agriculture but vastly more complicated and powerful. Think of this awesome machine running over open terrain and ignoring familiar boundaries. It plows across fields and fencerows with a fierce momentum that is exhilarating to behold and also frightening. As it goes, the machine throws off enormous mows of wealth and bounty while it leaves behind great furrows of wreckage. Now imagine that there are skillful hands on board, but no one is at the wheel. In fact, this machine has no wheel nor any internal governor to control the speed and direction. It is sustained by its own forward motion, guided mainly by its own appetites. And it is accelerating.*

– William Greider (1)





Randy and Glen have a long family history in the garment industry. Their maternal grandfather, Sam Solomon, owned Sample Dress, one of the largest manufacturers in the city. Their dad also owned a garment company—Carla Jane Dress (later A&R Dress). Operating between 1949 and 2012, this company saw the full sweep of deindustrialization.



TRAINED AS A PATTERN MAKER, RANDY MANAGED PRODUCTION AT CARLA JANE IN THE 1980S AND 1990S. HE ALSO SAT ON THE APPAREL MANUFACTURERS BOARD AND LOBBIED THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT FOR BETTER TRADE POLICIES.

IN THE 1990S, GLEN WAS THE PROPERTY MANAGER FOR HIS GRANDFATHER'S GARMENT FACTORY BUILDING AT 99 CHABANEL. HE WROTE A NOVEL LOOSELY BASED ON HIS EXPERIENCE CALLED "THE RENT COLLECTOR." HE NOW WORKS FOR A PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANY IN THE BUSINESS OF REVITALIZING FORMER INDUSTRIAL PROPERTIES.

I GUESS THAT WOULD BE THE LOGICAL NEXT STEP...

Randy and Glen describe their grandad as a trailblazing industrialist. Thinking big, Sam built a seven-floor factory complex at 99 Chabanel and moved his factory there in the 1960s, at a time when most garment shops were still downtown. In doing so, he helped establish a new garment industry to the north.

GLEN: HE WAS THE ANCHOR TENANT  
IN THE AREA.

RANDY: HE OCCUPIED FOUR FLOORS IN THAT  
BUILDING, SO HE HAD THOUSANDS OF EMPLOYEES.



WOW. BOLD MOVE. WHAT PROMPTED  
OTHER PEOPLE TO FOLLOW HIS LEAD?

I'D HAZARD THE GUESS THAT IT WAS JUST SIMPLY THAT THE  
INDUSTRY GOT TOO BIG. THAT THE BUILDINGS DOWNTOWN  
WERE JUST NOT SUITABLE FOR BIG FACTORIES. AND MY  
GRANDFATHER'S FACTORY AND HIS INNOVATIONS—HE WAS THE  
ONE THAT MADE IT VIABLE TO HAVE MULTIPLE DIVISIONS,  
AND TO BUILD IT TO THAT POINT. PRIOR TO HIM, COMPANIES  
WERE RELATIVELY SMALL. AND HE WAS THE FIRST ONE TO  
BE ABLE TO INNOVATE THE FABRICATION METHODS THAT  
ENABLED THESE COMPANIES TO GROW TO SIZES THAT WERE  
NOT KNOWN BEFORE.

GLEN : EVENTUALLY [OTHER MANUFACTURERS] STARTED MOVING NORTH ALONG SAINT LAURENT, ALONG THE MAIN, AND THEY BUILT THE BUILDINGS AT DE GASPE ...



RANDY: IT TOOK A WHILE BEFORE PEOPLE STARTED MOVING NORTHWARD. BEFORE THE METRO GOT THERE, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY DIFFICULT TO GET UP TO THAT PART OF THE CITY.



HUH. WHAT ABOUT YOUR  
DAD'S COMPANY?

99 CHABANEL HAD ALREADY  
BEEN BUILT BY MY  
GRANDFATHER. BUT MY  
FATHER'S COMPANY DIDN'T  
MOVE UP AT THE SAME TIME  
BECAUSE THEY ACTUALLY  
THOUGHT NO ONE WAS GOING  
TO GO UP THERE. SO, THEY  
WAITED TO SEE WHETHER OR  
NOT THE GARMENT INDUSTRY  
WOULD ACTUALLY MOVE  
BEFORE MOVING.

MY FATHER'S COMPANY WAS  
ACTUALLY A COMPETITOR  
OF MY GRANDFATHER'S  
COMPANY—THEORETICALLY  
A COMPETITOR BUT  
NOBODY COMPETED WITH MY  
GRANDFATHER'S COMPANY. MY  
DAD WAS PARTNERS WITH HIS  
TWO BROTHERS AND THEY  
ENDED UP MOVING TO 9320  
SAINT LAURENT, WHICH IS THE  
BUILDING ON THE CORNER OF  
SAINT LAURENT AND CHABANEL,  
AND EVENTUALLY HE WAS A  
PARTNER IN 99 CHABANEL AS  
WELL.

AND THAT'S HOW I CAME  
TO CHABANEL, THROUGH  
MY FATHER, THROUGH MY  
GRANDFATHER, AND 99 WAS THE  
FIRST BUILDING.

By the 1970s, Mile End and Chabanel were the two main poles of the garment industry.

GLEN : MY GRANDFATHER MENTIONS 800 COMPANIES IN 1963 SO THERE WERE THOUSANDS OF COMPANIES HERE, IT'S CRAZY...

BUT PART OF THE THING THAT MADE THIS AREA SO GREAT IS THAT LOTS OF COMPANIES THAT DID LOTS OF THESE DIFFERENT THINGS MOVED TO THIS AREA AND THEY WERE ALL MUTUALLY DEPENDENT, RIGHT? SO YOU HAD COMPANIES THAT DESIGNED, AND YOU HAD COMPANIES THAT WERE JUST SELLERS OF FABRIC, AND YOU HAD COMPANIES THAT JUST DID CUTTING—PEOPLE WOULD BECOME CONTRACTORS, IN OTHER WORDS. AND THERE WAS ANOTHER PHENOMENON CALLED HOMEWORKING...

OUR OLD FRIEND HOMEWORK!  
WE MEET AGAIN...



... WHICH IS RATHER THAN HAVE PEOPLE COMING INTO THE FACTORY TO DO YOUR SEWING. THEY WOULD DO IT AT HOME, AND THEY WOULD HAVE PEOPLE COMING AROUND THE CITY WITH BAGS OF CLOTHES IN PIECES THAT THEY WOULD BRING TO WOMEN AND THEY WOULD GET PAID FOR THE PIECE THAT THEY SEWED. AND THEY WERE LOCATED ALL OVER THE CITY. MOST MANUFACTURERS DID BOTH—THEY HAD THEIR OWN PLANTS INSIDE AND THEY HAD PIECEWORKERS OUTSIDE. WOMEN—ITALIAN WOMEN, GREEK WOMEN, CHINESE—IN THEIR BASEMENTS, DOING PIECEWORK.



THAT PART SOUNDS LESS GREAT, I GOTTA SAY...



FROM THE MID-70S TO THE EARLY 1980S, WHEN THEY CONTRACTED OUT, IT WAS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO HOMEWORKERS... THEY HAD A TEAM OF PEOPLE AND A DRIVER OUT THERE WHO WAS DELIVERING BUNDLES OF GARMENT PIECES AND PICKING UP FINISHED GARMENTS. BUT THAT CHANGED IN THE EARLY 1980S WHEN THE CHINESE POPULATION STARTED TO GET INVOLVED IN THE GARMENT INDUSTRY, AND THEY OPENED CONTRACTING SHOPS. IT WAS MUCH EASIER TO DEAL WITH CONTRACTORS WHO COULD TAKE THOUSANDS OF GARMENTS, AND PRESUMABLY THEY HAD HOMEWORKERS THEMSELVES, BUT AT LEAST WE WERE DEALING WITH ONE COMPANY AT A TIME, SO, IT TRANSITIONED FROM HAVING INDIVIDUAL HOMEWORKERS TO WORKING WITH CONTRACTORS.

IN SOME CASES THEY ACTUALLY HAD A FACTORY, AND SO YOU COULD GO TO THEIR FACTORY TO SEE HOW MANY PEOPLE THEY HAD WORKING AND WHAT SORT OF ORGANIZATION THEY HAD. AND SO, WE CERTAINLY FELT MORE COMFORTABLE DEALING WITH THOSE TYPES OF PEOPLE BECAUSE THERE WAS A CERTAIN ELEMENT OF QUALITY ASSOCIATED WITH AN OPERATION LIKE THAT AS OPPOSED TO SOMEONE WHO'S JUST GOING OUT AND DISTRIBUTING BUNDLES OF GARMENTS TO INDIVIDUALS AND BRINGING THEM BACK. THERE WOULD BE CERTAIN VARIATIONS IN THE QUALITY AND WHEN YOU'RE DEALING WITH LARGE COMPANIES LIKE THE BAY OR EATON'S OR SEARS, QUALITY IS A MUST.

70's



\*See endnotes for all image references from here on out.



HOMESCHOOLING GIVING WAY TO SWEATSHOP LABOUR... YOU'RE GIVING ME SERIOUS DÉJÀ VU RIGHT NOW. I THOUGHT THAT ERA WAS BEHIND US. WHY THE RENAISSANCE?

IT WAS A WAY FOR THE MANUFACTURERS TO GET AROUND UNIONIZATION. MY GRANDFATHER ALWAYS TALKS ABOUT HOW UNIONIZATION BENEFITTED THE WORKERS SO MUCH BUT ALSO BENEFITTED THE MANUFACTURERS IN A CERTAIN WAY. BUT AT ONE POINT THE UNIONS GOT SO POWERFUL, AND THEY WOULD BE PAYING WORKERS AT RATES THAT COULDN'T COMPETE WITH OFFSHORE LABOUR...

WHOA, I THINK YOU'RE PUTTING THE HORSE BEFORE THE CART THERE, GLEN. BUT PLEASE, GO ON...



2. dossier  
**CE N'EST PAS NOUVEAU  
DANS L'HISTOIRE**



*Policy Options to Improve Standards for Women Garment Workers in  
Canada and Internationally (January 1999)*

Subcontracting and homework aren't restricted to Northern countries. These practices are widespread outside the export processing zones in most Southern countries. In the Patronato area of Santiago, Chile, for example, there are some 740 small workshops with an average of twenty workers each. (6)

BUT LISTEN, MY DAD WAS A MANUFACTURER UNTIL 2012 2013. WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, HE HAD A HUGE FACTORY—HE HAD ABOUT A HUNDRED LADIES SEWING. AND OVER THE YEARS YOU WOULD SEE HE WAS DOING MORE AND MORE SEWING WITH PIECEWORKERS AND CONTRACTORS, AND EVENTUALLY HE JUST ELIMINATED HIS PLANT. IN THE END, THE ONLY PEOPLE HE HAD INSIDE WERE CUTTERS. THOSE WERE THE ONLY PEOPLE HE WAS EMPLOYING BECAUSE THE CUTTERS WERE LIKE THE SENIOR PEOPLE OF THE UNION, SO HE COULDN'T GET RID OF THEM. HE WAS A UNION SHOP, BUT THEY ALLOWED HIM TO DO THE SEWING ON THE SIDE, AS LONG AS HE KEPT THE CUTTERS IN HIS FACTORY.\*



\*Collective agreements between the ILGWU and its manufacturers specifically banned this practice, but enforcement was selective at best.

SO, CUTTERS GOT TO KEEP THEIR JOBS BECAUSE THEY WERE THE UPPER CRUST OF THE UNION. I'M GUESSING THEIR SPECIAL STATUS CARRIED OVER INTO THE 1970S AND 1980S?



RANDY: THERE WAS A CERTAIN KIND OF ARROGANCE. IT WAS PRIMARILY MEN DOING THE CUTTING. IT WAS PRIMARILY WOMEN DOING THE SEWING. IN FACT, ALL OF THE SEWING WAS WOMEN. SO, YOU'D HAVE LIKE 7 OR 8 OR 9 CUTTERS WHO WERE GETTING TOP WAGES, AND MAYBE A SMALL LITTLE PLANT, AND YOU DID MOST OF YOUR WORK OUTSIDE TO KEEP YOUR COSTS DOWN. AND EVENTUALLY, THE ONLY WAY FOR YOU TO AVOID THE UNION WAS TO GO BANKRUPT. THE LAW WAS, IF YOU WERE UNION-CERTIFIED, YOU COULD NOT OPEN A NON UNION COMPANY—YOU COULD NOT GET DE-CERTIFIED. SO, WHAT A LOT OF MANUFACTURERS DID IS SAY, "FINE WE'RE GOING BANKRUPT. WE'RE CLOSING DOWN." BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY WAY WE COULD COMPETE WITH MUCH CHEAPER IMPORTS.

Carla Jane was a union shop under the ILGWU. In an effort to get out from under the union and remain competitive, Randy's dad euthanized Carla Jane and resurrected it as A&R Dress. A&R could openly contract out all production.



MY FATHER ACTUALLY TRANSITIONED—HE STARTED AS A UNION MANUFACTURER—HE TRANSITIONED IN THE MID-70S AND '80S TO BECOME A NON-UNION MANUFACTURER AND THEN HE TRANSITIONED TO NO MANUFACTURING AND DOING ALL IMPORTING. SO, HIS COMPANY'S STORY IS A STORY OF A TYPICAL COMPANY THAT HAS TO REMAKE ITSELF OVER THE COURSE OF TWO GENERATIONS.

LET'S GET STRUCTURAL FOR A MINUTE. THE 1970S, '80S, AND '90S SAW A RAPID REORDERING OF THE INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF LABOUR FACILITATED BY TRADE LIBERALIZATION AND DEREGULATION—WHAT WE LOOSELY CALL GLOBALIZATION. THE GROWTH OF MULTINATIONAL RETAIL CHAINS, AND THEIR GROWING FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, HAD PROFOUND EFFECTS ON GLOBAL GARMENT PRODUCTION. HERE'S A 1999 REPORT ON THE CANADIAN GARMENT INDUSTRY TO EXPLAIN:



Ten or fifteen year ago, it was the manufacturers who did the designing, marketed their samples to hundreds of retailers, and then produced the orders. Today, the industry is turned on its head. It is dominated by giant retailers and super-labels who design the clothes and then contract out the production of their apparel to manufacturing contractors around the world. These retailers and super-labels dictate the price of production and the turnaround time. The contractors around the world compete for orders. In Canada, most retailers have their production done through a vast global web of contractors and subcontractors.

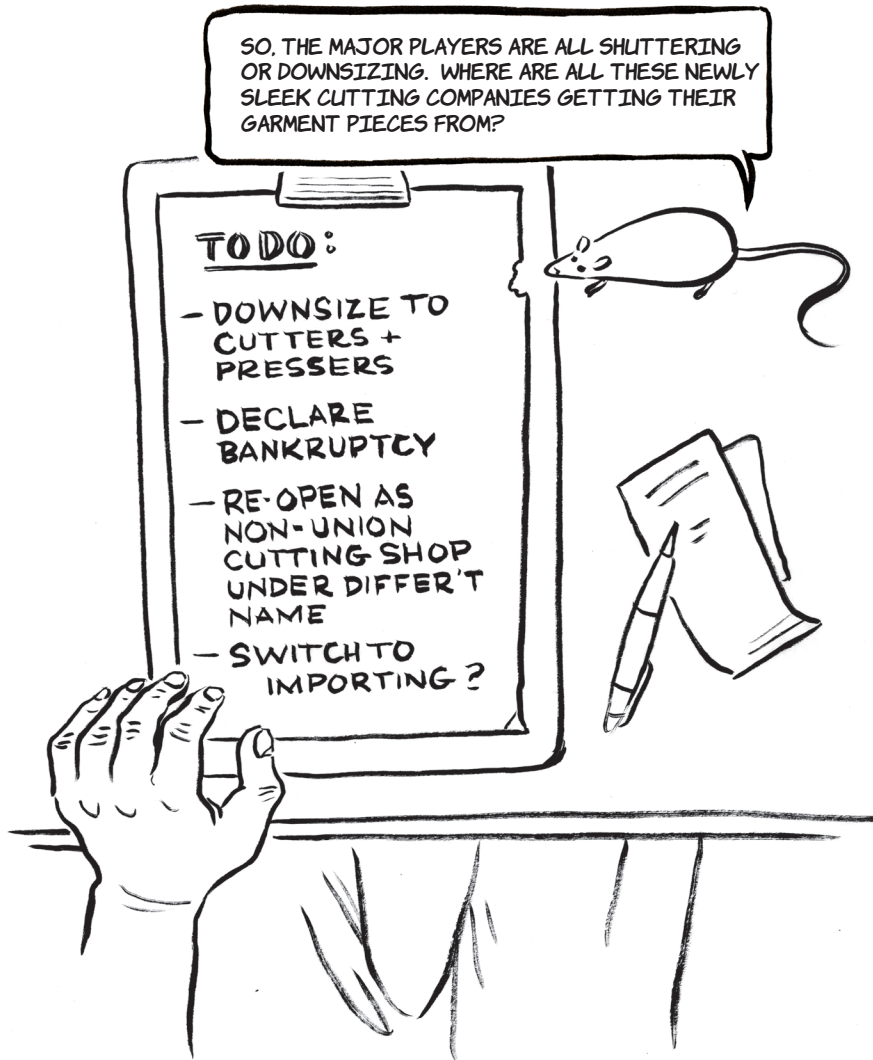
(7)

---

\*This “new international division of labour” was in many ways an extension of the same old strategies by which industrial capital has always sought to “maintain the social conditions necessary for profitability”—by exploiting social and spatial difference. What was unprecedented was the speed and scope of their implementation. (8) Like a piece on a chessboard, industrial capital can buy time by capturing a space. (9) Global economic restructuring at the end of the 20th century supercharged this ability, with the result that “the wielders of capital have far greater ability than workers to transcend and use space.” (10)



Sample Dress and Carla Jane Dress represent the two main responses of union shops in Montreal to international pressure and national economic decline. Sample closed its Montreal factory in 1984. Carla Jane restructured through homework and contract work.\*



\*These responses might be more similar than they seem. According to Carla Lipsig-Mummé, Sample went on to open a non-union cutting shop in Montreal to retain its cutters and transferred the rest of its production overseas. For manufacturers unable or unwilling to relocate, shifting production to homes and sweatshops was the easiest way to cut labour costs under pressure, evaporating “responsibility for minimum wages, vacation pay, sick benefits, maximum hours, pensions, maternity leave, overtime and assorted production costs.” (11) The vast majority of Montreal garment factories, being on the smaller side, chose to restructure this way. Both involved firing the female 80-90% of the workforce. (12)

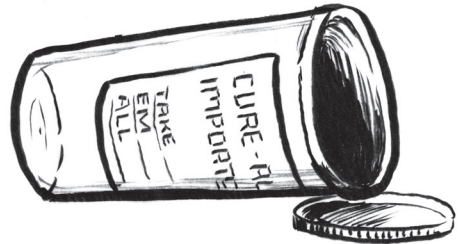
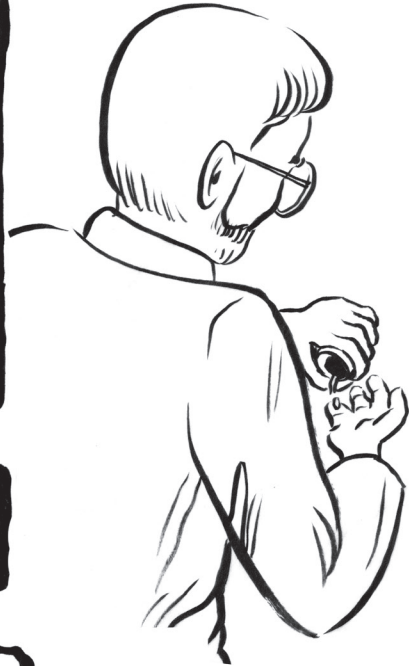
GLEN: THE MANUFACTURERS STARTED GOING BANKRUPT IN THE MID-1980S. AND THE GARMENT COMPANIES THEMSELVES EITHER BECAME IMPORTERS—I MEAN, THEY ALREADY STARTED DOING A LITTLE BIT OF IMPORTING, BUT IMPORTING WAS THE ONLY WAY YOU COULD SURVIVE, AT THAT POINT... BECAUSE WE'RE PAYING YOU TO BUY THE SAME GARMENT THAT WE CAN HAVE MANUFACTURED OVERSEAS OURSELVES FOR LESS—WHY WOULD I DO THAT? AND THEY STARTED REDUCING THEIR BUYING FROM LOCAL MANUFACTURERS, WHO AREN'T ACTUALLY MANUFACTURING ANYMORE BECAUSE THEY'RE IMPORTING.



HUH. WAS THERE AN AWARENESS AT THE TIME THAT THIS IS WHAT EVERYONE ELSE WAS DOING?

RANDY: THEY DIDN'T REALLY KNOW A LOT ABOUT WHAT THEIR COMPETITORS WERE DOING, SO THERE WAS A LOT OF SPECULATION, BUT IT WAS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL. THERE WEREN'T VERY MANY MANUFACTURERS IN THE 1980S. OTHER COMPANIES WERE MOSTLY WORKING WITH CONTRACTORS OR IMPORTING. THEY (SAMPLE DRESS) MIGHT HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE LAST TO ACTUALLY HAVE A FACTORY.

I STILL REMEMBER SOME GARMENT BOSSES FROM MY SHOP FLOOR DAYS. MAYBE THEY CAN CORROBORATE.





1983

**SID** : THE TREND TODAY IS CONTRACTING OUT. IT'S VERY EXPENSIVE TO RUN YOUR OWN FACTORY AND TO KEEP THINGS GOING AND IT'S VERY, VERY COSTLY. AND IF YOU HAVEN'T GOT WORK ONE DAY, WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THE WORKERS? YOU GOTTA KEEP THEM BUSY. SO, WE HAVEN'T GOT THAT HEADACHE. I MEAN, IT'S 1 AND 1 MAKES 2 AND THAT'S IT!

**IRWIN** : NO, WE DON'T PREOCCUPY OURSELVES WITH GOING TO (CONFRONT) A CONTRACTOR WHO'S DOING GOOD WORK FOR US. WE PAY WHAT WE BELIEVE IS A FAIR PRICE AND HOW HE RUNS HIS BUSINESS LARGELY IS HIS AFFAIR.



**NORMAN** : IF YOU ASK THAT PERSON—WHO IS WORKING IN A SMALL FACTORY, OR (WITH) A CONTRACTOR, OR EVEN WORKING AT HOME—IF THEY'D RATHER HAVE A \$20—AN—HOUR JOB OR IF THEY'D RATHER GO ON WORKING FOR THE WAGE THAT THEY'RE GETTING, THEY'D SAY, "GIVE ME THE \$20—AN—HOUR JOB." UNFORTUNATELY, THOSE JOBS ARE NOT THERE, AND THE ALTERNATIVE THAT THOSE PEOPLE HAVE IS REALLY TO BE ON WELFARE. AT THE MOMENT, THE CHOICE IS REALLY TO NOT PRODUCE THE GOODS IN CANADA, OR TO PRODUCE THEM THROUGH THE CONTRACTORS WHO USE HOMEWORKERS TO PRODUCE SOME OF THEIR GOODS.

**PAUL** : THERE'S ESTIMATED BETWEEN 800 AND 900 CONTRACTORS IN THE INDUSTRY. I WOULD SAY APPROXIMATELY 50% ARE OPERATING OUTSIDE THE LAW AT LEAST A LITTLE BIT. THEY MUST OPERATE THAT WAY WITH THE LABOUR LAWS THAT WE HAVE HERE IN QUEBEC. WE'RE TALKING DRESSES THAT ARE GOING TO BE RETAILING IN THE \$20 RANGE. THAT'S VERY LOW. THEY'RE COMPETING DIRECTLY WITH THE IMPORTS. (13)



WOW, OK SO, IT'S JUST LIKE THE EARLY 1900S EXCEPT EVERYONE'S IMPORTING FROM OVERSEAS WHILE ALSO COMPLAINING ABOUT THE EFFECT OF IMPORTS ON THE LOCAL GARMENT INDUSTRY? WHERE IS THE GOVERNMENT IN ALL THIS? WHAT ABOUT THE APPAREL MANUFACTURERS BOARD YOU SAT ON?

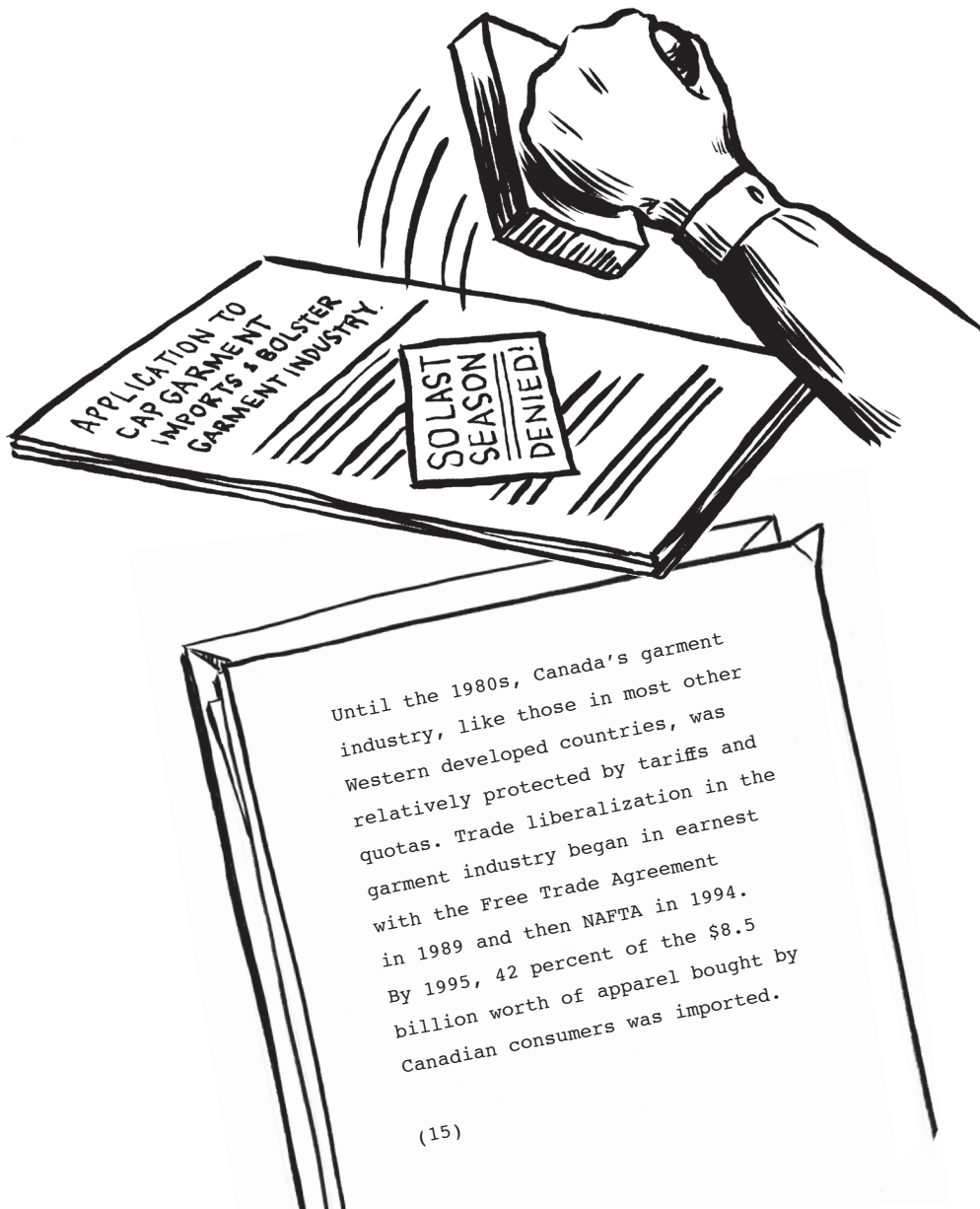
WHAT THEY CONCENTRATED ON WAS TARIFF AND TRADE POLICY. IF CANADA WAS ENTERING INTO TRADE AGREEMENTS, THESE BOARDS ATTEMPTED TO MAKE SURE THAT THE INTERESTS OF DOMESTIC MANUFACTURERS WERE RESPECTED AND CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS. AT ONE TIME, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WORKED DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY IN THE APPAREL INDUSTRY IN CANADA. BUT FROM THE MID-'80S ONWARDS, THERE WAS A LOT OF TALK OF BUILDING A KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY, ETC. THERE WAS A FEELING THAT THE GARMENT INDUSTRY WAS A THROWAWAY AS FAR AS THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONCERNED.

INSTEAD OF INTERVENING LIKE IT DID IN THE 1930S, THE GOVERNMENT TURNED ITS BACK?

THE STORY OF CHABANEL IS ALSO A STORY OF HOW MANUFACTURING, WHICH BUILT THIS AREA, ENDED UP GOING OFFSHORE WHEN CHINA BECAME PART OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION. AND THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA BASICALLY SAID, "WE'RE REALLY NOT GONNA SUPPORT THESE INDUSTRIES ANYMORE—WE'RE GONNA SUPPORT HIGH TECH. THESE ARE OLD-SCHOOL INDUSTRIES. WE'RE MORE INTERESTED IN HIGH-TECH, BRAINY INDUSTRIES." AND WHAT THEY DID WAS THEY KIND OF ABANDONED THE COMPANIES HERE.\*

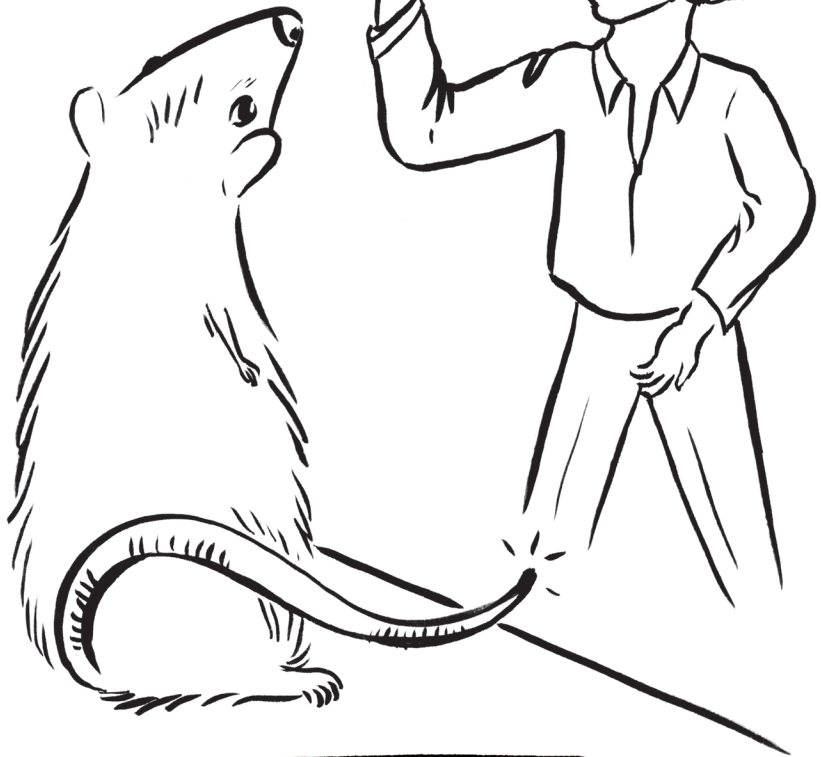


\*Historian Jackie Clarke writes about how talk of inevitability is used to consign industrial workers to the past, even when they remain a substantial part of the workforce. (14) Tempting as it is to read a post-industrial future back into the past, garment deindustrialization was a willed and hotly contested process, with winners and losers. Framing factory shutdowns as part of the march of progress has been a way to neutralize this conflict and reaffirm its outcome. But history contains many possible timelines.



\*It's worth noting here, as we learned in Chapter 2, that protectionist restrictions tended to offer little to workers on the community level, and tariffs often actually insulated corporations from competitive pressures and still left management free to squeeze its workforce. (16)

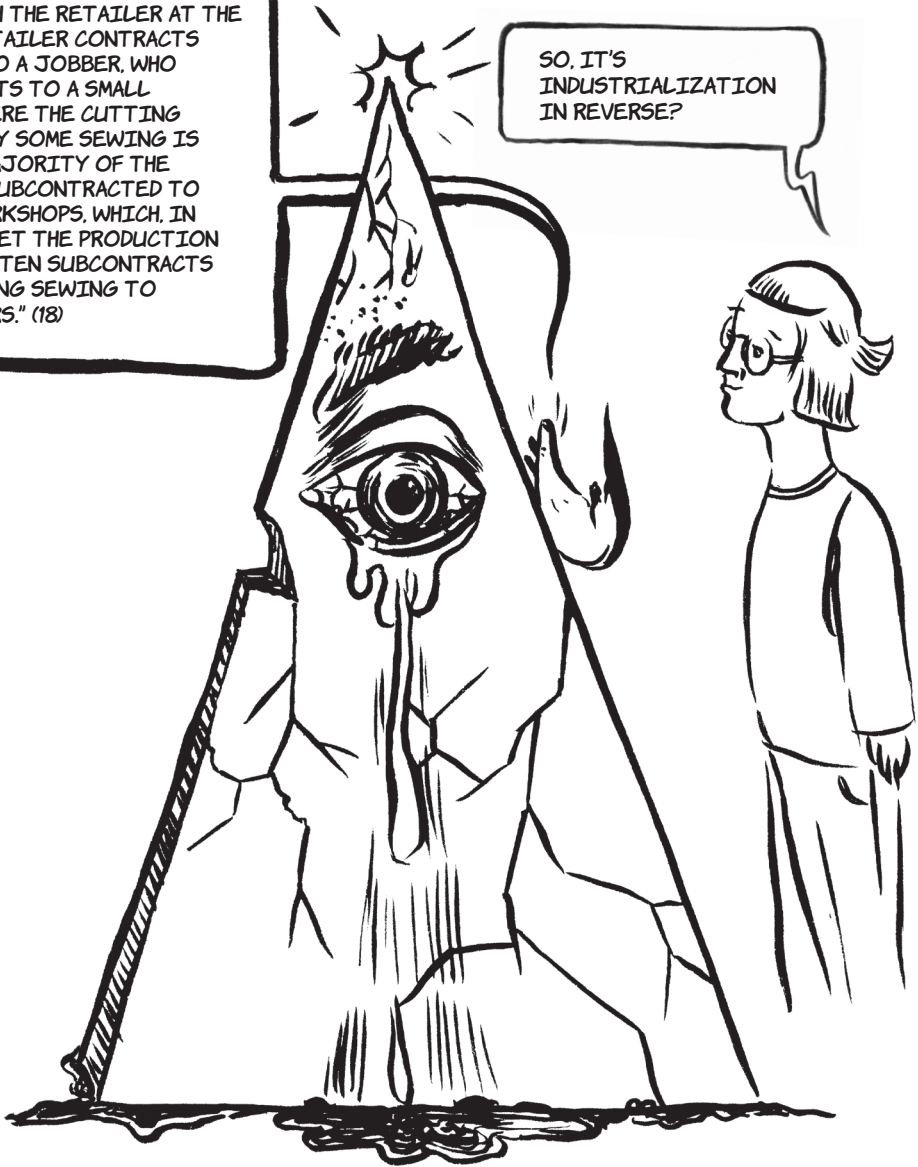
MOUSE, HELP ME OUT. THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO STOP PROTECTING THE INDUSTRY IN THE 1980S, LEAVING IT VULNERABLE TO INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION, AND MANUFACTURERS RESPONDED USING THE SAME OLD COST CUTTING STRATEGIES THEY USED IN THE EARLY 1900S—HOMEWORK AND CONTRACT WORK?



YES, BUT THIS TIME IT WAS LIKE A CURSED PYRAMID WITH RETAILERS SITTING AT THE VERY TOP AND CONTRACTORS AT EVERY LEVEL TAKING A CUT, LEAVING WORKERS WITH LESS AND LESS. AND INSTEAD OF STEPPING IN TO MITIGATE AS THEY DID IN THE 1920S AND 1930S, GOVERNMENTS AND UNIONS ARE STEPPING OUT. (17)

"THE END PRODUCT OF RESTRUCTURING IN THE CANADIAN INDUSTRY IS A PYRAMID-SHAPED SYSTEM OF PRODUCTION THAT BEGINS WITH THE RETAILER AT THE TOP. THE RETAILER CONTRACTS WORK OUT TO A JOBBER, WHO SUBCONTRACTS TO A SMALL FACTORY WHERE THE CUTTING AND POSSIBLY SOME SEWING IS DONE. THE MAJORITY OF THE SEWING IS SUBCONTRACTED TO SMALLER WORKSHOPS, WHICH, IN ORDER TO MEET THE PRODUCTION DEADLINE, OFTEN SUBCONTRACTS THE REMAINING SEWING TO HOMEWORKERS." (18)

SO, IT'S INDUSTRIALIZATION IN REVERSE?





BASICALLY, EXCEPT WITHOUT THE FINALITY,  
BECAUSE THE WHOLE SAGA STARTS OVER AGAIN  
IN A CHEAPER LABOUR ENVIRONMENT!

RIGHT, OUR CLOTHES STILL COME  
FROM SOMEWHERE ...

BUT THE MONTREAL STORY DOESN'T END THERE EITHER—  
AFTER DEINDUSTRIALIZATION COMES A GLORIOUS DAWN  
OF REAL ESTATE SPECULATION! I THINK GLEN WAS ABOUT  
TO FILL US IN ON THAT...

\*Drawing inspired by Tim Strangleman's writing on how "Deindustrialization can be conceived of as the negative bookend to industrialization, a mirror image of change." (19)





In 2005, a property management company named Groupe Dayan started buying up all the factory buildings around Chabanel. This is the company Glen now works for.

SO, GEORGES DAYAN CAME, WITH A PENSION FUND, AND THEIR PROJECT WAS TO BUY THE ENTIRE AREA. SO, THEY BOUGHT OUR BUILDING. THEY BOUGHT THE ENTIRE FRANKEL PORTFOLIO OF BUILDINGS, AND THEY BOUGHT 125 CHABANEL. SO, WE OWN 7 BUILDINGS. THE PENSION FUND, BY THE WAY, IS PSP INVESTMENTS, AND PSP IS THE PENSION FUND FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA. THEY ARE ONE OF THE LARGEST REAL ESTATE INVESTORS IN CANADA AND THEY OWN PROPERTY ALL OVER THE WORLD. BILLIONS AND BILLIONS OF DOLLARS THAT THEY INVEST. AND THEY WENT PARTNERS WITH GEORGES. GEORGES WAS A MINORITY SHAREHOLDER BUT IT WAS HIS VISION TO BUY UP AS MUCH PROPERTY IN THIS AREA TO REIMAGINE THE AREA AND REINVIGORATE IT...\*

---

\*Cities are defined by change, but the direction of change is rarely a given. Historian Fred Burdill point out that “deindustrialization and subsequent gentrification...are not ‘natural’ economic forces but rather a series of moments in an organized accumulation strategy directed by capital and the state.” (20) As public and private actors disinvest in production, devalued industrial areas become ground zero for a new economic emphasis on speculative investment. According to Fred, “This new accumulative strategy...in the colonial logic of capitalism, offers up ‘abandoned’ territory for new projects and ‘alternative’ lifestyles of a fictional ‘creative class.’” (21)



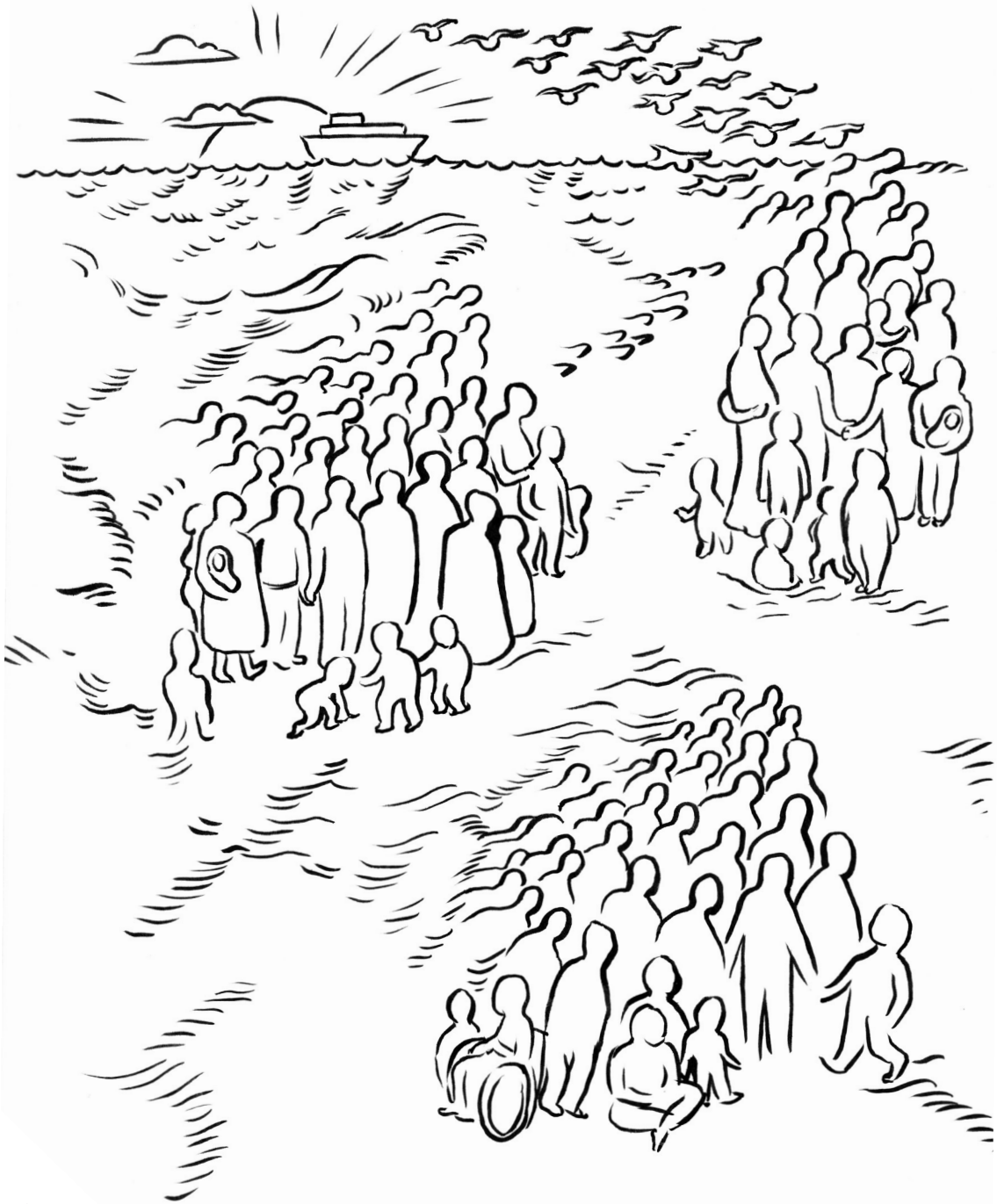


FROM RAGS TO ... REVITALIZATION? TOO BAD THE MILE  
END WAS ALREADY BOUGHT UP!

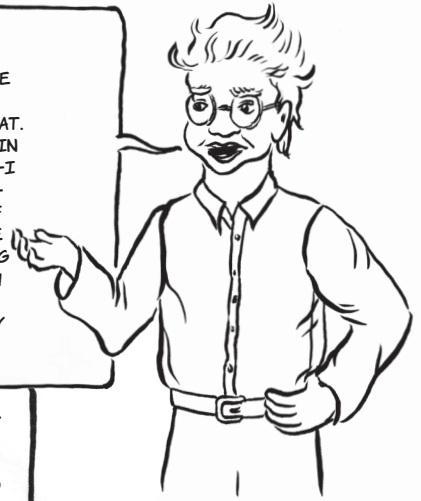
IT SOUNDS LIKE RANDY AND GLEN MADE OUT FINE. AND  
THE GOVERNMENT MADE OUT FINE. AND THE GARMENT  
BUILDINGS THEMSELVES MADE OUT FINE. BUT ISN'T AN  
INDUSTRY MOSTLY COMPRISED OF ... WORKERS?

THE INDUSTRY WAS SO IMPORTANT FOR IMMIGRANTS. BECAUSE  
IT WAS QUOTE UNQUOTE LOW-SKILLED LABOUR. WHEN  
MANUFACTURING CLOSES DOWN, IT'S CLOSING A DOOR ON AN  
ENTRY POINT INTO CITIZENSHIP. FOR IMMIGRANTS TO GET  
ABSORBED AND TO PLANT ROOTS. YOU KNOW, THE JEWS DID IT  
FIRST--THE ITALIANS, THE GREEKS, THE CHINESE--[THEY] ALL  
DID IT THROUGH THE SAME DOOR. AND WHAT HAPPENED IN THE  
'90S, THE 2000S, WITH THE DEMISE OF MANUFACTURING--YOU  
CAN ASK YOURSELF THE QUESTION, "HOW ARE IMMIGRANTS GOING  
TO PLANT THEIR ROOTS IF THEY DON'T HAVE THAT AVENUE TO  
SETTLE, TO GET DECENT PAYING JOBS?"

Glen starts talking about Elliot Lifson. Lifson is president of the Canadian Apparel Federation and Vice-Chairman at Peerless Clothing, along with many other garment trade organizations.



AND SO OF COURSE THERE'S LEGISLATION IN THE GOVERNMENT THAT WAS DESIGNED TO PROTECT THE INDUSTRY, AND THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO LET THE LEGISLATION DIE, LIKE TARIFFS ON IMPORTS, TARIFFS ON FABRICS—THINGS LIKE THAT. THIS WAS HOW GOVERNMENT WAS ALWAYS PROTECTING CERTAIN INDUSTRIES THAT THEY WANTED TO MAINTAIN. AND ELLIOT—I ONCE HEARD HIM TESTIFYING BEFORE SOME KIND OF COMMITTEE AND HE SAID, "PEOPLE HAVE A VERY WRONG IMPRESSION OF THE GARMENT INDUSTRY. WE DO NOT MAKE CLOTHING, WE MAKE CITIZENS." [LAUGHS] I'M PARAPHRASING BUT WHAT HE'S TRYING TO SAY IS THAT'S HOW IMPORTANT THIS INDUSTRY IS. IF YOU DON'T PROTECT THIS INDUSTRY, WHAT ARE NEW IMMIGRANTS COMING TO THIS COUNTRY GONNA DO? YOU KNOW, NOT EVERY BODY CAN JUST BE A SOFTWARE DEVELOPER...



IT SEEMS LIKE A VERY DISTANT MEMORY. I HAVE TO SAY THAT I DIDN'T REALLY LOOK BACK. I HAVE CERTAINLY NO REGRETS. AND I SEE HOW MUCH OF A STRUGGLE IT STILL IS. IT'S A BIT OF A SHAME BUT THIS IS ONE OF THOSE INDUSTRIES THAT HAD TO BE DRAGGED, KICKING AND SCREAMING, INTO FIRST THE 20TH AND NOW THE 21ST CENTURY. IT'S A SHAME BUT AFTER ALL THOSE YEARS, THERE'S KIND OF NOTHING LEFT. YOU PUT A KEY TO THE DOOR AND—IT'S NOT LIKE ANYONE'S GOING TO MISS YOU. IT'S KIND OF LIKE DUST IN THE WIND.\*



\*This elegy is specifically about A&R, but it extends quite poetically to the general phenomenon of deindustrialization in large cities. Historian Steven High points out that "the industrial past and its ruination...loom especially large" in smaller places, "where not much has filled the economic and cultural vacuum." In cities, where factories are soon "reimagined and reinvigorated" (to use Glen's terms), becoming condos, art spaces, and tech companies, deindustrialization is easily read as simple neighbourhood change. The human cost of this process is rendered invisible. For High, this public amnesia is a "one-two punch against working-class neighbourhoods and the old culture of industrialism." (22)



All told, tens of thousands of workers, most of them immigrant women, lost their jobs to garment deindustrialization in Montreal. (23)



## NOTES

- (1) William Greider, *One World, Ready or Not: The Manic Logic of Global Capitalism* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1997), 13.
- (2) Glen Rotchin, interview by Lauren Laframboise, Montreal, November 4, 2018, audio & transcript. All subsequent “Glen” speech is taken from this interview. Lauren conducted this interview at Glen’s office on Chabanel for her thesis proposal on the garment industry. I should note here that the questions asked of Glen and Randy are not the same ones posed in the interviews, and using them to set the scene required a fair bit of creative rearranging. That said, I left the individual sentences untouched and tried to retain their original context.
- (3) Randy Rotchin, interview by Lauren Laframboise, Montreal, November 2, 2018, audio & chronology. All subsequent “Randy” speech is taken from this interview (see above).
- (4) (Page 30) Images taken from *Vie Ouvrière* 31, no. 151 (Jan-Feb 1981): 5, cover page. From a big box of personal papers loaned to me by Fatima Rocchia on May 26, 2019 at her farm in Saint-Joseph-du-Lac.
- (5) (Page 31) Image taken from *ibid.*, 23.
- (6) Lynda Yanz, Bob Jeffcott, Deena Ladd, and Joan Atlin, *Policy Options to Improve Standards for Women Garment Workers in Canada and Internationally* (Ottawa: Status of Women Canada, 1999), 11.
- (7) *Ibid.*, 9.
- (8) Cowie, *Capital Moves*, 2.
- (9) Andy Merrifield, *Henri Lefebvre: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 108.
- (10) Cowie, *Capital Moves*, 185.
- (11) This and previous from Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 45.
- (12) *Ibid.*, 45; 46.
- (13) Sid Abrahams, Irwin Steinberg, Norman Moyer, and Paul Blondin quoted in “The garment industry: working at night,” *CBC Digital Archives*, 1984.
- (14) Jackie Clarke, “Closing Time: Deindustrialization and Nostalgia in Contemporary France,” *History Workshop Journal* 79 (Spring 2015): 107-125 and “Closing Moulinex: Thoughts on the Visibility and Invisibility of Industrial Labour in Contemporary France,” *Modern & Contemporary France* 19, no. 4 (2011): 443-458.
- (15) Yanz et al., *Policy Options*, 10.
- (16) Cowie, *Capital Moves*, 193.
- (17) Yanz et al., *Policy Options*, 14.
- (18) *Ibid.*
- (19) Tim Strangleman, “Deindustrialisation and the Historical Sociological Imagination: Making Sense of Work and Industrial Change,” *Sociology* 51, no. 2 (2016): 478.
- (20) Burrill, “Thesis Proposal,” 5.
- (21) *Ibid.*, 16.
- (22) This and previous from Steven High, “Beyond Aesthetics: Visibility and Invisibility in the Aftermath of Deindustrialization,” *International Labor and Working Class History* 84 (Fall 2013): 150.
- (23) I have no direct source for this but was able to roughly surmise it from demographic data on Québec garment workers (such as in Sheila Arnopoulos, *Problems of Immigrant Women in the Canadian Labour Force*, Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1979).



**4.**

## ***ALL SEWN UP?***

*Women, whether at the shrinking center or growing periphery of industrial production, have borne the brunt of the process of restructuring both past and present.*

– Jefferson Cowie (1)

*The girls feel that they have a certain power, but they know that I have no support from the union . . .*

– Fatima Rocchia quoted in *Chatelaine* (2)



This is Fatima Rocchia.

Fatima worked at Sample Dress before it closed in the mid-1980s. Sample was still the largest manufacturer in the city, and its 600 workers belonged to ILGWU.

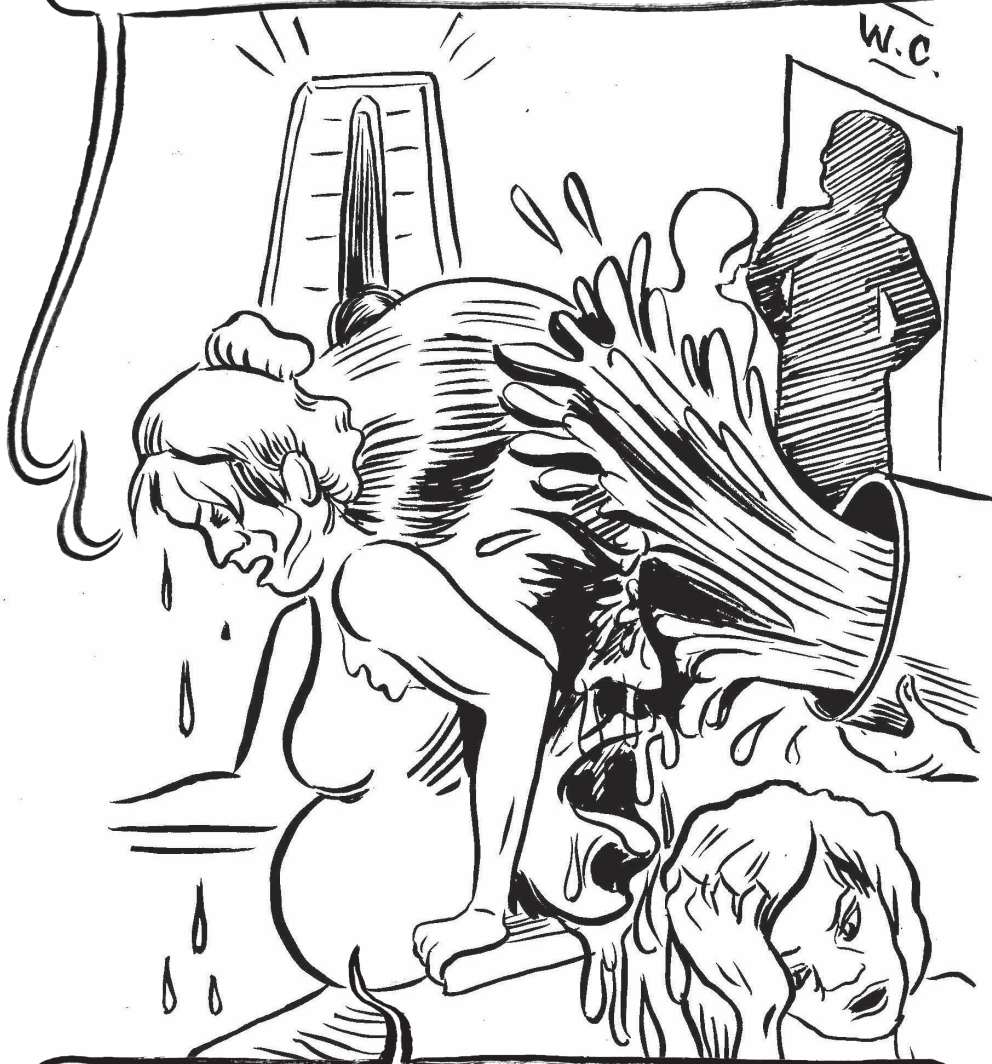


ON PARLAIT À PEU PRÈS 20 LANGUES.  
ON ÉTAIT TOUTES DES FEMMES  
IMMIGRANTES LÀ-DEDANS. IL Y  
AVAIT DES FEMMES QUI PRENAIENT  
LEUR RETRAITE, ET PUIS MOI, COMME  
J'ÉTAIS PORTUGAISE, J'AVAIS  
PARCE QU'IL Y AVAIT DES FEMMES LÀ  
QUI NE PARLAIENT PAS UN MOT DE ...  
NI LE FRANÇAIS NI L'ANGLAIS. (3)\*

---

\*After the 1940s, Montreal's garment industry soaked up successive waves of Italian, Greek, Portuguese, Haitian, and Chinese immigrants, most of them female. By the 1980s, almost all the clothing industry workers in Canada were female immigrants. (4)

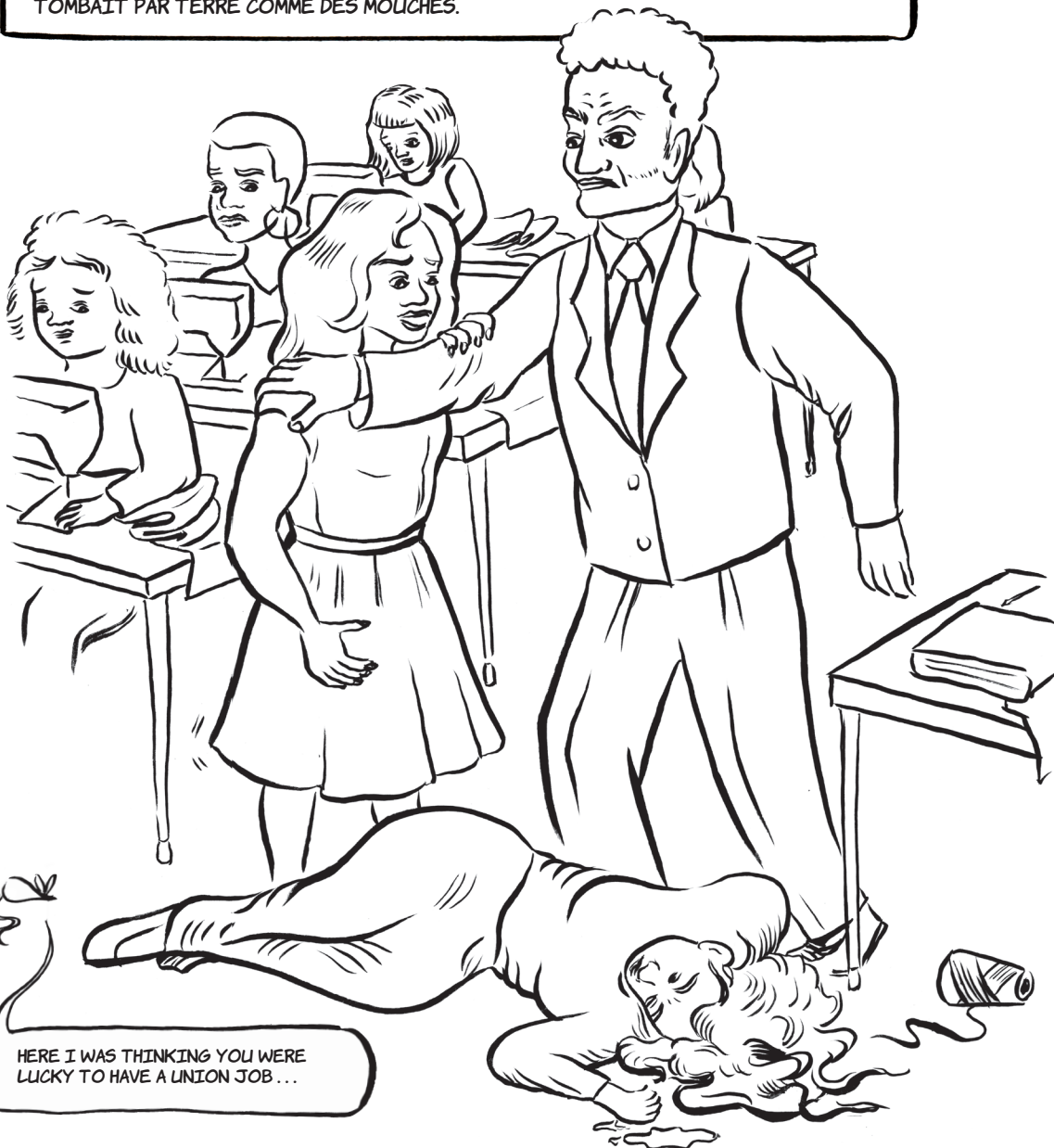
C'ÉTAIT L'ESCLAVAGE. L'ESCLAVAGE. MOI JE VENAIS D'UNE DICTATURE, AU PORTUGAL—À L'ÉPOQUE ON AVAIT LA DICTATURE SALAZAR, LE COUP D'ÉTAT ÇA S'EST FAIT APRÈS... ET C'ÉTAIT PIRE QU'AU PORTUGAL, LES CONDITIONS DE TRAVAIL, SUR LA RUE CHABANEL.



J'AI VU DES FEMMES TOMBER PAR TERRE. IL FAISAIT CHAUD, ON ARRIVAIT AVEC UNE CHAUDIÈRE D'EAU FROIDE POUR L'ENVOYER DANS LA FACE. C'ÉTAIT DES CONDITIONS COMME ÇA, LE TRAVAIL. LÀ J'EN REVENAIS PAS, J'AI DIT: "APPELLE L'AMBULANCE," QUELQUE CHOSE, "APPELLE SON MARI," TOUT ÇA, ILS ONT DIT: "NON, NON, NON. ELLE VA MIEUX, LÀ, ELLE VA FINIR LA JOURNÉE." ILS L'ONT PRIS, ELLE S'EST RELEVÉE, ILS L'ONT MIS À LA MACHINE À COUDRE, ET ELLE CONTINUAIT À TRAVAILLER. C'ÉTAIT DES CONDITIONS ÉCOEURANTES.

À UN MOMENT DONNÉ, J'AVAIS FAIT VENIR LE MINISTÈRE DU TRAVAIL FAIRE UN TEST SUR LA QUALITÉ DE L'AIR ET SUR LA CHALEUR PARCE QUE C'ÉTAIT FOU. IL Y AVAIT TOUTES LES PRESSES POUR PRESSER LES VÊTEMENTS, ET ÇA C'ÉTAIT TOUT À VAPEUR CHAUDE. IL Y AVAIT LES FENÊTRES OUVERTES, MAIS DANS TOUTE LA MANUFACTURE ILS CHAUFFAIENT TOUT LE TEMPS POUR FOURNIR LA VAPEUR CHAUDE. EN PLUS DE FAIRE 44 DEGRÉS DEHORS, ON AVAIT LA TEMPÉRATURE EN DEDANS.

JE TE JURE, ON TOMBAIT DANS LES POMMES. SI T'ÉTAIS UN PEU FATIGUÉE OU EN DÉBUT DE GROSSESSE ET ÇA N'ALLAIT PAS BIEN, OU DES CHOSES COMME ÇA, ÇA TOMBAIT PAR TERRE COMME DES MOUCHES.



HERE I WAS THINKING YOU WERE LUCKY TO HAVE A UNION JOB...



C'ÉTAIT DES SOUS-CONTRATS QUI VENAIENT. ON POU-  
VAIT PAS DIRE QU'ON ÉTAIT SI MAL PAYÉS QUE ÇA. PARCE  
QU'EN 1980 QUAND JE SORTAIS POUR L'ACCOUCHEMENT  
DE MA FILLE, J'AVAIS PLUS DE DIX DOLLARS DE L'HEURE.  
ON AVAIT UNE PARITÉ, PRESQUE. IL Y AVAIT BEAUCOUP  
DE FEMMES, DE JEUNES FEMMES AUSSI, DE MON ÂGE—À  
L'ÉPOQUE J'AVAIS 25 ANS—J'AI ACCOUCHE DE MA FILLE  
À 25 ANS ET LES CONJOINTS ÉTAIENT BEAUCOUP DANS  
LA CONSTRUCTION.



ON AVAIT L'ÉQUIVALENT DU SALAIRE D'UN PLOMBIER À L'ÉPOQUE. ON ÉTAIT  
BIEN PAYÉES, CELLES QUI ÉTAIENT SYNDIQUÉES... C'ÉTAIT PAS LA MER À BOIRE,  
MAIS QUAND JE COMPARE AUJOURD'HUI, AVEC LE SALAIRE MINIMUM, QUAND JE  
REPENSAIS À TOUT ÇA, C'ÉTAIT QUAND MÊME DES BONS SALAIRES, ET LÀ ILS NE  
VOULAIENT PAS NOUS LE PAYER. C'EST QUE LÀ, LA VILLE, ILS ONT TROUVÉ LA  
COMBINE DE FAIRE LE TRAVAIL EN CHINE. ET LÀ ILS NE VOULAIENT SURTOUT PAS  
AVOIR DU TRAVAIL SYNDIQUÉ.



Unionized garment workers made decent wages in miserable conditions. Subcontracting and factory closure created job insecurity across the industry and this could be used to intensify work and lower labour standards, including in the union shops that remained. (5)



Ouais...  
Ça va être juste  
un SOUVENIR  
dans pas grand  
temps!



PROTÉGEZ  
VOS  
EMPLOIS  
APPOSEZ  
L'ÉTIQUETTE  
SUR  
CHAQUE  
VÊTEMENT



Fabriqué au Canada

PROTECT  
YOUR  
JOB

SEW IN THE  
LABEL!

1982 JUILLET/JULY						
DIM SUN	LUN MON	MAR TUES	MERC WED	JEU THURS	VEN FRI	SAM SAT
4	5	6	7	1	2	3
11	12	13	14	8	9	10
18	19	20	21	15	16	17
25	26	27	28	22	23	24
			29	30	31	

1982 AOÛT/AUGUST						
DIM SUN	LUN MON	MAR TUES	MERC WED	JEU THURS	VEN FRI	SAM SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

1982 SEPTEMBRE/SEPTEMBER						
DIM SUN	LUN MON	MAR TUES	MERC WED	JEU THURS	VEN FRI	SAM SAT
5	6	7	1	2	3	4
12	13	14	8	9	10	11
19	20	21	15	16	17	18
26	27	28	22	23	24	25
		29	30			

UNION INTERNATIONALE

Fatima was fired for requesting maternity leave. When she contested this decision in court, Sample was ordered to take her back.



À LA FIN, MOI, JE N'ÉTAIS PLUS ÇAPABLE. À UN MOMENT DONNÉ, MOI JE ME SUIS DIT: "JE VAIS PERDRE MON BÉBÉ, ÇA N'A PAS DE BON SENS." C'EST LÀ QUE J'AI DEMANDÉ LE RETRAIT PRÉVENTIF.

MOI J'ÉTAIS CONGÉDIÉE DE LA COMPAGNIE PARCE QUE J'AVAIS PRIS LE RETRAIT PRÉVENTIF. MAIS LÀ C'EST PARCE QU'ILS NE VOULAIENT PAS M'AVOIR PARCE QU'ILS ORGANISAIENT LA FERMETURE ET LÀ J'AI ÉTÉ EN COUR. ILS M'ONT PAYÉ À RIEN FAIRE À LA MAISON. IL Y A EU UN MOMENT OÙ J'AI RETOURNÉ, PARCE QU'ILS ONT EU UN MANDAT DE LA COUR QU'IL FALLAIT QU'ILS ME REPRENENT AU TRAVAIL. JE SUIS ARRIVÉ, ILS M'ONT MIS DANS LA MANUFACTURE, ET ILS NE M'ONT PAS DONNÉ DE TRAVAIL, TU SAIS, C'EST UNE MANUFACTURE, TOUT LE MONDE TRAVAILLE. ET MOI J'ÉTAIS DANS LE MILIEU, ILS M'ONT DONNÉ UNE MACHINE, ILS M'ONT ASSIS À UNE MACHINE ET ILS NE M'ONT PAS DONNÉ DE JOB DU TOUT.



FATIMA WAS FIRED SIX TIMES IN 3 MONTHS!

... Fatima Rocchia a été congédiée six fois de son atelier de couture entre octobre 1980 et janvier 1981 parce qu'elle allait aux toilettes trop souvent... Mais, Henri Hunger, le gérant de Sample Dress, au 99, de la rue Chabanel à Montréal, n'a pas osé écrire le motif du congédiement dans la lettre de renvoi. En fait, il n'en a donné aucun.

LES FEMMES. ELLES ÉTAIENT CONGÉDIÉES L'UNE APRÈS L'AUTRE, PARCE QU'IL N'Y AVAIT PAS ASSEZ DE TRAVAIL. LÀ, FINALEMENT, ILS ONT FINI PAR ME CONGÉDIER EN DISANT QU'IL N'Y AVAIT PAS DE TRAVAIL.



SEATON MFG. CO.  
99 CHABANEL, ROOM 404  
MONTRÉAL, QUÉ. H2N 1C3

REGISTERED

Rocchia Fatima  
7400 Chateaubriand Apt 4  
Montreal, Quebec

August 27th, 1982.

Please be advised that due to economic conditions beyond our control, we are forced to close our plant.

You are therefore, hereby given notice of (2) weeks in conformity with Bill 126 of the Statutes of the Province of Quebec, commencing August 30th, 1982, after which delay your employment shall be definitely terminated.

Yours truly,

SEATON MFG. CORP.  
*H. Ungar*  
(Mr.) H. Ungar

RECOMMANDEE

le 27 août, 1982

Soyez avisé qu'en raison d'ordre économique hors de notre contrôle, il devient nécessaire de fermer notre usine.

Vous êtes alors donné par ces présentes un avis de congédiement de (2) semaines conformément au Bill 126 Status de la Province de Québec, débutant le 30 août, 1982, l'expiration de laquelle votre emploi sera définitivement terminé.

Bien à vous,

SEATON MFG. CORP.  
*H. Ungar*  
(M.) H. Ungar

le 3 octobre, 1980.

ESTABLISHED 1938



FRANCESCA  
GISELLE  
LOVELY LADY  
ZAZIE  
BULLECRAFT  
ST-TROPEZ

Mme. Fatima Rocchia,  
8030 rue St. Denis,  
Montréal, Québec  
H2R 2G1

Chère Madame:

Ceci est pour vous aviser qu'à partir du 3 octobre, 1980 à 4 hres. P. M., vos services ne sont plus requis par Sample Compagnie de Fabrication.

Après plusieurs avertissements que votre travail était peu satisfaisant, nous trouvons qu'il n'y a eu aucune amélioration et nous n'avons pas d'autre alternative que de vous congédier tel qu'indiqué au-dessus.

Nous regrettons.

Bien à vous,

SAMPLE Compagnie de Fabrication

(M.) H. Ungar

HU/jl

C.C. Union Internationale  
La Guilde

*H. Ungar*

The contraction of Canadian industry in the 1980s and 1990s saw “a devastating loss of full-time, standard jobs, and a disproportionate loss of unionized jobs.” (10)



More than three in ten garment workers lost their jobs between 1988 and 1995. (11) Many unionized garment jobs were lost to homework and subcontracting. In the first six months of 1981, 2,000 factory jobs were lost to homework and 150 garment shops closed in Quebec alone. By the end of the year, at least 20,000 women were estimated by the Quebec government to be sewing from home. (12)\*

STRUGGLING TO COMPETE WITH CLOTHING PRODUCED IN LOW-WAGE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, MONTREAL MANUFACTURERS ADAPTED BY RE-CREATING THESE CONDITIONS AT HOME.

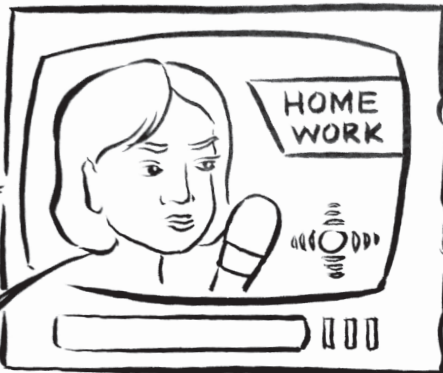


\*Discussions around industrial decline rarely feature female workers in the textile and electrical appliance industries (14). This perhaps reflects the assumption that women are less affected by unemployment than men, or that the transition to service work, already considered “women’s work,” does not entail a loss of identity for female industrial workers. (15) Writing in 1999, Cowie spoke of “the need to adjust the popular image of the unemployed male steel or auto worker as the quintessential victim of deindustrialization.” (16) As deindustrialization picks up in China, where 60% of rural-to-urban factory workers are women, we’d do well to heed his advice. (17)



1983

IT'S ESTIMATED THERE ARE NOW 17000 HOMEWORKERS IN THIS INDUSTRY AND THAT THE GROWING UNDERGROUND LABOUR FORCE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR 30% OF ALL THE CLOTHING THAT COMES FROM QUEBEC. THE REGULAR SHOP WORKERS FEAR THE INDUSTRY'S RACE TO CUT COSTS WILL CONSIGN THEM TO THE SAME FATE.



I CAN SEE THAT BECAUSE WE'RE WOMEN, THEY WANT US TO GO BACK HOME AND WORK AT HOME. AT A DOLLAR THE HOUR, A DOLLAR THE HOUR IS SO LOW! BUT MAYBE IT'S TOO MUCH! WE'LL ALWAYS BE OVERPAID FOR THEM. IF THEY CAN HAVE US FOR 25 CENTS THE HOUR, THEY'LL DO IT.

THE FUTURE OF THESE WORKERS POSES A DILEMMA FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POLICY MAKERS. THE INDUSTRY'S FAILURE WOULD MEAN THE LOSS OF 65,000 REGULAR FACTORY JOBS IN QUEBEC ALONE. YET ITS CONTINUED EXISTENCE DEPENDS ON THE ESTIMATED 25,000-MEMBER UNDERGROUND LABOUR FORCE. WHAT IS DISTURBING IS THAT LABOUR PRACTICES OFFICIALLY CONDEMNED BY THE INDUSTRY ARE GIVING MORE AND MORE COMPANIES THEIR COMPETITIVE EDGE. THIS MAY ENSURE THEIR FUTURE, BUT THE WORKERS SAY THEY FEAR WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR THEM.



WHAT DO THEY WANT FROM US? "HELP US, HELP US!" WE HAVE NOTHING. WE'RE POOR PEOPLE. WE'RE WORKERS. WE HAVE TO HELP THE GOVERNMENT. WE HAVE TO HELP THE POLICE. WE HAVE TO HELP OUR BOSS. BUT WHO'S HELPING US? WHO'S THINKING OF US? (18)

Fatima was a member of Local 262 of the ILGWU. She asked them to grieve her dismissal but they declined. She was forced to do it herself with the help of a lawyer.



J'AI ÉTÉ EN COUR AVEC EUX, ET ILS SAVAIENT TRÈS BIEN QUE CE N'ÉTAIT PAS CORRECT. J'AI GAGNÉ LE SALAIRE DE DEUX ANS ET DEMI EN ARRIÈRE, PAR LA COUR. ILS M'ONT DONNÉ UN SALAIRE, MAIS J'AI JAMAIS ÉTÉ CAPABLE DE RETOURNER AU TRAVAIL TEL QUEL, PARCE QUE TOUTES CES ANNÉES-LÀ ILS ORGANISAIENT LA FERMETURE. IL Y AVAIT DE LA FRAUDE LÀ-DEDANS. C'ÉTAIT ÉPOUVANTABLE.

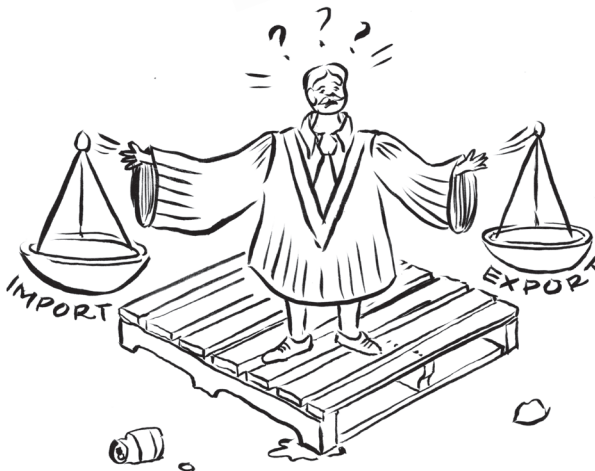
Fatima est une opératrice syndiquée, membre du local 262 de l'Union internationale des ouvriers du vêtement pour dames (UIOVD). Elle a donc rappliqué au syndicat avec sa lettre de renvoi pour demander qu'on présente un grief. Pas de veine; l'agent d'affaires qui s'occupe de son cas, Isabelle Bittichesu, ne sait pas comment présenter un grief, même après neuf ans à ce poste. Plus encore, il n'existe même pas de formule de grief. On parvient, malgré tout, à rédiger celui-ci. Mais la veille de l'audition du grief, Fatima reçoit un appel de Sample Dress: elle travaille le lendemain.

Marie Pinseneau

Ceci est pour vous informé que l'audition en cours supreme sur mon cas aura lieu le 12 juillet 1984 à 9:30 au pallet de justice sur la rue Notre Dame la salle 2.16. Je vous demande votre solidarité enfin de me facilité la tâche. Ci joint je vous envoie les documents qu'il vous faut pour completer votre dossier.

Syndicalement... ~~Fatima Rocchia~~.....

Rocchia



QUAND J'AVAIS ÉTÉ CONGÉDIÉE DE LA COMPAGNIE, ILS N'ONT PAS VOULU ME REPRENDRE PARCE QU'ILS ONT DÉCIDÉ QUE LE RETRAIT PRÉVENTIF, C'ÉTAIT QUE J'ALLAIS ABANDONNER LE TRAVAIL, ILS N'ONT PAS VOULU RECONNAÎTRE LA LOI QUI AVAIT ÉTÉ FAITE POUR LE RETRAIT PRÉVENTIF. J'ÉTAIS UNE DES PREMIÈRES, OU SINON LA PREMIÈRE, QUI EST ALLÉE EN COUR POUR CONTESTER LE TRAVAIL. QUAND J'ÉTAIS EN COUR, MON SOUTIEN... C'ÉTAIT PAS MON SYNDICAT QUI ME DÉFENDAIT. J'ÉTAIS OBLIGÉ DE ME PAYER UN AVOCAT. NORMALEMENT C'ÉTAIT MON SYNDICAT QUI DEVAIT ME DÉFENDRE, MAIS ILS N'ONT PAS VOULU ME METTRE UN AVOCAT.



The decline of garment manufacturing came at a low point for the ILGWU. Its top-down business unionism continued apace after 1940 and its white male leadership and immigrant female membership were worlds apart socioeconomically by the 1970s. Union bosses often worked closely with garment bosses and rarely went to bat for their rank-and-file members.\*

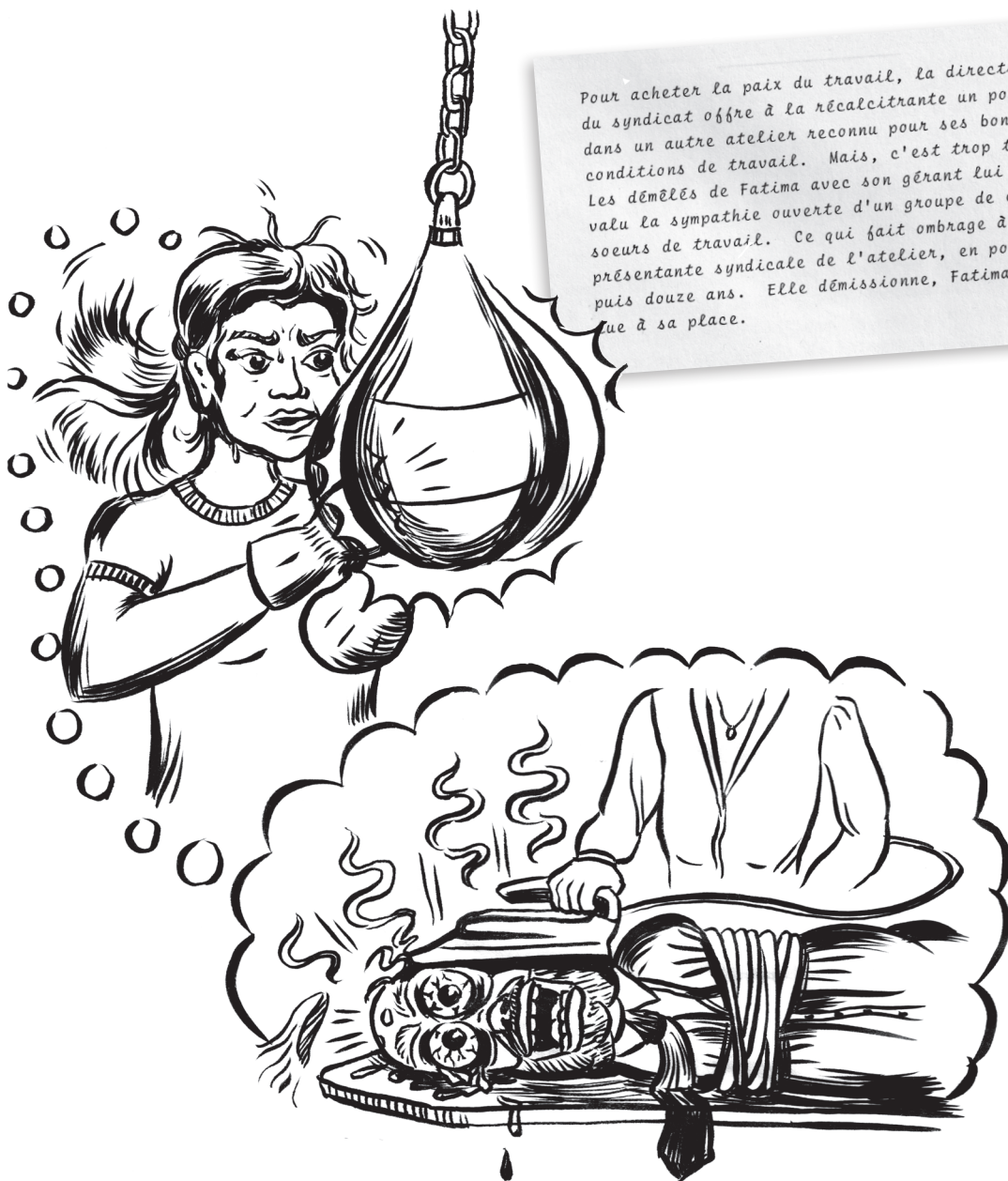


---

\*Women, comprising 88% of the Quebec ILGWU's membership around this time, were largely excluded from its leadership. (21) Driving this fact home were the old photographs of union events I found in the ILGWU archive at the Centre d'histoire et d'archives du travail. Cowie's history of the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) finds a similar trend: "Though women were in the majority at each location, in no instance did a woman hold the top leadership position in any RCA union local." (22)

Fatima's struggles with her manager earned her the solidarity of her coworkers and she was elected union representative for the 600 women in her division.

Pour acheter la paix du travail, la directrice du syndicat offre à la récalcitrante un poste dans un autre atelier reconnu pour ses bonnes conditions de travail. Mais, c'est trop tard. Les démêlés de Fatima avec son gérant lui ont valu la sympathie ouverte d'un groupe de consœurs de travail. Ce qui fait ombrage à la représentante syndicale de l'atelier, en poste depuis douze ans. Elle démissionne, Fatima est émise à sa place.



But Fatima was still a nobody as far as her union leaders were concerned. ILGWU executives sometimes came to the factory, but only to speak with the boss.

QUAND ON LES FAISAIT VENIR DANS LES MANUFACTURES, ILS PARLAIENT AVEC LE BOSS, ILS SE SERRAIENT LA MAIN ET ILS NE VENAIENT PAS ME VOIR. JAMAIS ILS VENAIENT VOIR. ILS SERRAIENT LA MAIN DU BOSS, ILS PARTAIENT.



This social distance produced a chronic suspicion of union elites at a time when membership was being rapidly eroded by closures and subcontracting. Union democracy and morale aside, the ILGWU was not operating from a position of strength. With imports flooding in and manufacturers jumping the union ship to stay afloat, union bosses were mostly concerned with keeping their jobs. (24)\*

---

\*ILGWU and ACWA, “which cover most workers, are American-run and looked upon with deep suspicion by their members. Both have a long history of being ‘company unions’ which regularly collude with garment industry management.” (25)

IL Y AVAIT UNE GRANDE CAMPAGNE DE PUBLICITÉ À UN MOMENT DONNÉ FAIT PAR LE SYNDICAT. C'ÉTAIT MARQUÉ "ACHETEZ CANADIEN." ON AVAIT UNE ÉTIQUETTE QU'ON MONTRAIT À LA TÉLÉVISION ET C'ÉTAIT SIGNÉ "UNION INTERNATIONALE, VÊTEMENTS POUR DAMES."



À UN MOMENT DONNÉ À LA FIN, ILS OUVRAIENT DES BOÎTES ET PRENAIENT LES VÊTEMENTS DE CHINE, ILS METTAIENT LES ÉTIQUETTES "FAIT AU CANADA." LES ÉTIQUETTES PAYÉES PAR LES SYNDIQUÉES ET ILS SORTAIENT CES VÊTEMENTS. C'ÉTAIT LÀ QUE ÇA BRASSAIT DE LA MERDE.

Glen and Randy's grandfather wanted to quietly and discreetly close Sample down. Fatima saw this coming well in advance.



ON VOYAIT DEPUIS LONGTEMPS QU'ILS ORGANISAIENT LA FERMETURE PARCE QUE C'ÉTAIT LA COMPAGNIE OÙ EST-CE QU'IL Y AVAIT LE MOINS DE MACHINES MODERNES. ÇA SE POUVAIT PAS LÀ PETIT À PETIT ILS PRÉPARAIENT LES FERMETURES DES USINES UNE APRÈS L'AUTRE. ET C'ÉTAIT TOUT ÇA QUE NOUS ON REVENDIQUAIT. IL Y AVAIT DES MANUFACTURES QUI FERMAIENT AVEC LA COMPLICITÉ DU SYNDICAT. ET C'EST ÇA QU'ON AVAIT DÉNONCÉ.\*

\*These jobs may have been mind-numbing and back-breaking, but few wanted to see them disappear, least of all on someone else's terms. The search for "cheap and docile" industrial labour "has...meant new economic and social opportunities to thousands of blue-collar women" even as it has created new forms of subjection and exploitation in the workplace. (26) It's important to sit with this contradiction as we think about the ongoing global process of deindustrialization.



Fed up with Fatima's shit-stirring, Sample tried to pay her to stay home.

J'AI REFUSÉ D'ÊTRE PAYÉE. IMAGINE-TOI, C'EST PAS LE BOSS QUI M'A FAIT ÇA, C'EST L'AVOCAT DU BOSS QUI EST ARRIVÉ, QUI M'A DIT: "LA PROPOSITION DU BOSS C'EST QUE TU TE TIENS TRANQUILLE CHEZ VOUS, ET TU VAS REÇEVOIR TA PAYE TOUTES LES SEMAINES." IL NE VOULAIT PAS QUE JE DÉNONCE CE QUI SE PASSAIT DANS LA COMPAGNIE. IL NE VOULAIT PAS. IL ORGANISAIT UNE FERMETURE, LA PLUS GROSSE FRAUDE QU'IL NE POUVAIT PAS AVOIR.



ILS NE VOULAIENT PAS QUE J'AYE CONTACT AVEC LES FEMMES. ILS NE VOULAIENT PAS PARCE QUE JE DÉMÉLAIS TOUTS CES PROBLÉMATIQUES. C'EST POUR CES PROBLÈMES-LÀ QU'ILS NE VOULAIENT PAS M'AVOIR DANS LES JAMBES. ILS ORGANISAIENT ÇA. LA COMPAGNIE A FINI PAR FERMER. C'EST LE GOUVERNEMENT QUI A MIS LA CLÉ SUR LA PORTE. ILS DEVAIENT POUR 3 MILLIONS DE DOLLARS À L'ÉPOQUE POUR TOUTES SORTES DE CHOSES NON PAYÉES. C'ÉTAIT TROP TARD. DE TOUTE FAÇON ILS ÉTAIENT ORGANISÉS, TOUT ÉTAIT FAIT. QUAND LE GOUVERNEMENT EST ARRIVÉ, C'ÉTAIT TROP TARD. TOUT ÉTAIT ORGANISÉ.

Unfortunately for Sample, Fatima had an inflated sense of pride and not much to lose.





On August 15, 1983, 9,500 members of the Quebec ILGWU stage an industry-wide strike in Montreal and beyond. The strike will cripple production at 170 garment shops, just as the industry gears up to produce its winter clothing lines. (27)

## Première grève des mininettes en 43 ans

■ À 8 heures, ce matin, 12 500 mininettes brûlaient une page de leur blésoir syndical en ne rentrant pas au travail. La première grève depuis 43 ans dans l'industrie du vêtement pour dames est en marche.

Mais hier soir encore, dans les bureaux du minis-

tère du Travail, boulevard Crémazie, les négociations se poursuivaient entre les représentants de **PAUL ROY**

l'Union internationale du vêtement pour dames et les représentants patronaux des 170 ateliers touchés

par cette grève.

(La dernière grève des mininettes remonte à avril 1940 et avait duré une semaine. Une grève de trois semaines avait eu lieu en 1937, peu de temps après que les travailleuses du vêtement pour dames eurent joint les rangs de l'UITV. À l'époque, elles

avaient fait partie d'un syndicat d'obédience communiste à l'origine d'une grève importante en 1951.)

Plus tôt, au cours du week-end, après avoir réglé des réclamations touchant notamment aux procédures de grève et d'arbitrage, après avoir réglé voir **GRÈVE en A 2**

## la presse

LE PLUS GRAND QUOTIDIEN FRANÇAIS D'AMÉRIQUE

LA MÉTÉO: ENSOLEILLÉ.  
MIN: 14°, MAX: 27°.  
DEMAIN: ENSOLEILLÉ. DÉTAILS PAGE A 2



35 cents

HORS DE LA ZONE MÉTROPOLITAINE 45¢

MONTRÉAL, LUNDI 15 AOÛT 1983, 99<sup>e</sup> ANNÉE, N° 188, 46 PAGES, 4 CARIERS

### AUJOURD'HUI

#### • REMANIEMENT

Maintenant que le cabinet fédéral a été remanié par 13 changements majeurs, y compris cinq mises à pied, une question court sur toutes les lèvres: Trouverai-je à la prochaine élection générale?

page A 4

#### • PORNO

Sous prétexte de la liberté d'expression, l'industrie de la pornographie peut-elle faire l'apologie de la violence contre les femmes et de l'utilisation des enfants comme objets sexuels?

page A 8

#### • ÉDITORIAL

Jean-Guy Dubuc considère que la dernière assemblée mondiale de la radio communautaire devrait inspirer les communicateurs du Québec.

page A 6

#### • MTL-OUEST

La riche Montréal-Ouest, qui doit sa naissance à l'invasion des Français américains, s'est dotée d'une administration municipale unique au Québec.

page A 9

TOUJOURS À UNE FIN. SURTOUT LES VACANCES CALME!

## Jean-Paul II revient en France en simple pèlerin



Accueilli par le président de la République, M. François Mitterrand, le pape Jean-Paul II s'est vu remettre des fleurs par des enfants de la région de Tarbes.

réf. photo AFP

■ LOURDES (d'après AFP et AP) — Le sévère dénonciateur des persécutions contre les croyants dans le monde d'aujourd'hui a été le thème de l'allocution prononcée par Jean-Paul II, au soir de la première journée de son pèlerinage à Lourdes.

Cette journée a été marquée par ailleurs par l'interview du souverain pontife avec le président français François Mitterrand et des scènes impressionnantes de ferveur collective de quelque sept milliers de milliers d'un dispositif de sécurité sans précédent.

Le souverain pontife, dont c'est le deuxième voyage en France et le 14<sup>e</sup> voyage à l'étranger de son règne, est arrivé peu après 15 heures à l'aéroport de Tarbes-Ossun où il est accueilli à sa descente d'avion par les autorités religieuses et le président François Mitterrand.

Dans la salle de l'aéroport, de retour pour l'occasion, le pape Jean-Paul II a salué dans la personne du pape « l'incarnation qui a si profondément, si intimement marqué l'histoire universelle et, particulièrement, l'histoire de mon pays ».

De l'aéroport, le pape et le chef d'État français ont pénétré en hélicoptère la préfecture de Tarbes où ils ont eu un entretien de 45 minutes, consacré aux « importantes questions »: la liberté, la paix, la Pologne, le Tchad, l'Amérique latine.

Une rencontre profitable

« Une rencontre avec Jean-Paul II est toujours profitable », a déclaré M. Mitterrand en quittant la préfecture de Tarbes, une demi-heure après son entretien avec le pape. Les deux chefs d'État ont examiné tous les problèmes urgents depuis un an et il a également été question d'affaires internationales, dont la situation au Tchad.

Interrogé sur la situation au Tchad, le président français a déclaré: « Nous en avons échangé notre avis et nous en sommes tous deux très préoccupés ».

De son côté, le porte-parole de l'Élysée, Michel Vassallo, a tenu à souligner la grande cordialité de l'entretien: « Des échanges importants ont eu lieu, la nécessité de lutter contre le terrorisme, l'instabilité en Amérique latine. Mais dans cet entretien chaque respect à la liberté de l'autre ».

François Mitterrand avait, au terme de son interview avec le souverain pontife, revendiqué ce dernier jusqu'à la fin de l'après-midi dans la cour d'honneur de la préfecture où le pape s'est avancé vers la foule d'un pas rapide pour serrer les mains des spectateurs.

La grotte de Massabielle

Après ce bain de foule qui a bousculé le protocole, le Saint-Père a gagné le parvis de la cathédrale où 20 mètres du diocèse l'attendaient.

Le pape a un peu plus tard accompli la plaque commémorative offerte en 1923 à Varsovie au maréchal Pilsudski, alors chef des armées alliées et qui avait le titre de maréchal de Pologne.

Après de ces quelques instants politiques de son voyage, Jean-Paul II a commencé son pèlerinage d'une trentaine d'heures, accueilli à l'entrée de Lourdes par le maire, M. François Abadie, qui lui a remis la médaille de la ville.

Le saint-Père a utilisé la traditionnelle « papamobile » pour traverser les rues pavées de la ville et se rendre, pour se recueillir quelques instants, à la grotte de Massabielle, où la Vierge est apparue à Bernadette Soubirous le 11 mai 1858.

voir la PAGE en A 2

### NETTE TENDANCE À LA HAUSSE

## 1185 suicides au Québec l'an dernier

■ Le nombre de suicides a doublé au Québec au cours de la dernière décennie, si bien que le taux québécois se situe maintenant parmi les plus élevés mondiaux.

L'augmentation a été particulièrement marquée depuis cinq ans, alors que la plupart des autres provinces canadiennes enregistraient une baisse sensible.

■ **ANDRÉ NOËL**  
de la «*seu*»  
Statistique Canada n'a pu

au Canada et de 11,5 à 11,3 en Ontario. De 1974 à 1982, il augmentait au Québec de 12,8 à 17.

Taux dramatique  
Par ailleurs, selon une étude de la ministre des Affaires sociales, le nombre de décès par suicide est de 21 p. cent plus élevé chez les Québécois dont la langue d'usage est le français que dans le reste de la population québécoise. En calculant d'après les chiffres de cette étude et ceux fournis par le ministère de la Justice, cela donne le taux dramatique de 19,4 par

### LENDI-LE-MAGNIFIQUE



### La foule ovationne Jarryd

Anders Jarryd avait causé des surprises tout au long de la semaine de compétitions au parc Jarry. Hier, il s'est battu avec un courage que la foule a apprécié en l'ovationnant longuement. Mais Lendl était trop fort et l'a écarté facilement, 6-2 et 6-2.

pages 6 et 7

### 5-3 HIER

## Les Expos perdent la série

SOMMAIRE	
Actualités canadiennes	B 2, B 7
Arts et spectacles	C 3 & C 5
Informations	B 3, B 4
Cinéma	B 5
Débat, nouvelles, etc.	C 6
Économie	C 1, C 2
Qu'en pensez-vous?	C 3
FEUILLETON	

WE'RE GOING TO  
LOSE A LOT OF  
MONEY! RETAILERS  
WILL CANCEL  
ORDERS IF  
DELIVERY DATES  
ARE NOT MET. IF A  
RETAILER LOSES  
A DAY HE NEVER  
RECOVERS IT! (30)



WORKING  
CONDITIONS  
ARE GOOD!

WORKERS DON'T  
WANT THINGS  
LIKE AIR-  
CONDITIONING!  
(31)



WE WON'T  
INCREASE  
WAGES.

YOU CAN'T  
DRAW BLOOD  
FROM A STONE!  
(32)



WE'RE WALKING OUT NOT  
BECAUSE WE WANT TO BUT  
BECAUSE WE HAVE TO. BUT  
WE'RE WILLING TO GO BACK  
TO THE BARGAINING TABLE  
FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME AT A  
MOMENT'S NOTICE. (33)

GILLES GAUTHIER  
GARMENT WORKERS' UNION.







NOUS SOMMES TRAITÉES  
COMME DU VRAI BÉTAIL! LA  
DIRECTION NE NOUS CONNAIT  
PAS AUTREMENT QUE PAR NOS  
NUMÉROS! (34)

I'VE BEEN AN OPERATOR  
FOR 25 YEARS AND I HAVE PUT UP WITH TOO  
MUCH TO GIVE THEM ANYTHING. WE WORK IN  
100-DEGREE HEAT, IT'S NOISY, IT'S DUSTY,  
AND THE BOSSES DRIVE CADILLACS. AND THEIR  
OFFICES ARE ALL AIR-CONDITIONED—THEY  
WANT ME TO GIVE UP SOMETHING? (35)

THE BOSSES ARE TRYING TO  
INTIMIDATE US—LETTERS  
THREATENING THEY WOULD  
CLOSE DOWN IF WE DON'T  
ACCEPT WAGE CUTS! (36)

OTTAWA SAID YESTERDAY IT WOULD  
TIGHTEN INSPECTIONS, BUT NOT  
REDUCE IMPORT QUOTAS. THE STRIKE  
COULD JEOPARDIZE THE SALE OF  
MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF CLOTHES  
UNLESS IT IS SETTLED BY THE END OF THE  
WEEK. IT'S TOO EARLY TO TELL WHETHER  
CONSUMERS WILL BE  
AFFECTED. (37)



HOT DAMN! HERE  
I WAS THINKING  
MOST OF THESE  
WORKERS WERE  
RESIGNED TO  
THEIR FATE. HOW  
DID THEY PULL  
THAT OFF WITH  
UNIONIZED  
LABOUR ON ITS  
BACK? NOT TO  
MENTION NO  
LANGUAGE IN  
COMMON...

EXACTLY---  
STRIKES  
DON'T JUST  
MAGICALLY  
HAPPEN! LET'S  
GO BACK TO  
WHERE WE  
LEFT OFF...

## NOTES

- (1) Cowie, *Capital Moves*, 5.
- (2) Fatima Rocchia quoted in “Les femmes cousent, le syndicat empoche,” *Chatelaine*, September 1981, reproduced in *Dossier noir sur l’UIOVD*, Montreal: CATV, 1981, 27 (from Fatima’s personal papers).
- (3) Fatima Rocchia, interview by Leona Siaw, Saint-Joseph-du-Lac, November 5, 2017, audio & partial transcript. All subsequent “Fatima” speech is from this same interview. I contacted Fatima after reading about her struggles with Sample Dress in Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women.”
- (4) Johnson, *The Seam Allowance*, 21.
- (5) Yanz et al., *Policy Options*, 11.
- (6) (Page 56) Top two images: *Vie Ouvrière* 31, no. 151 (Jan-Feb 1981): 13 (from Fatima’s personal papers).
- (7) (Page 56) Bottom image: 1982 ILGWU pocket calendar sourced from Fatima’s personal papers.
- (8) (Page 58) Excerpt from “Les femmes cousent, le syndicat empoche,” reproduced in *Dossier noir sur l’UIOVD*, Montreal, 1981, 23 (from Fatima’s personal papers).
- (9) (Page 59) Letters of dismissal from Henri Hunger to Fatima Rocchia, 27 August, 1982 and 3 October, 1980, Fatima’s personal papers.
- (10) Yanz et al., *Policy Options*, 13.
- (11) Ibid.
- (12) This and previous: Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 47. The Montreal advocacy group Rank & File (now *Au bas de l’échelle*) put this number at between 60,000 and 100,000 (Linda McQuaig, “The ever-so-humble and low pay at home,” *Maclean’s*, November 10, 1980. Reprinted from the Maclean’s archive, 2019.)
- (13) (Page 61) Images left to right: cover of an educational pamphlet published by *la Ligue des femmes du Québec* (year unknown); *Vie Ouvrière* 31, no. 151 (Jan-Feb 1981): 35 (both from Fatima’s personal papers).
- (14) Andy Clark, “‘Stealing Our Identity and Taking It over to Ireland.’ Deindustrialization, Resistance, and Gender in Scotland,” in *The Deindustrialized World: Confronting Ruination in Post Industrial Places*, eds. Steven High, Lachlan MacKinnon, and Andrew Perchard (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017), 335 and Steven High, “The Wounds of Class’: A Historiographical Reflection on the Study of Deindustrialization, 1973-2013,” *History Compass* 11, no. 11 (2013): 1002.
- (15) Clark, “‘Stealing Our Identity,’” 335.



- (16) Cowie, *Capital Moves*, 5.
- (17) *Between the Lines: Listening to Female Factory Workers in China*, Business for Social Responsibility (BSR), March, 2013.
- (18) Reporter Trish Wood and garment worker Mirielle Trottier quoted in “The garment industry,” *CBC Digital Archives*.
- (19) (Page 63) Excerpt from “Les femmes cousent, le syndicat empoche.”
- (20) (Page 64) Note from Fatima to Marie Pinseneau regarding her upcoming court appearance, date unknown, Fatima’s personal papers.
- (21) Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 52.
- (22) Cowie, *Capital Moves*, 197.
- (23) (Page 66) Excerpt from “Les femmes cousent, le syndicat empoche.”
- (24) Yanz et al., *Policy Options*, 26-27.
- (25) Arnopoulos, *Problems of Immigrant Women*, 15.
- (26) Cowie, *Capital Moves*, 196.
- (27) Narrative text adapted from “Garment industry hit by first walkout,” *The Gazette*, August 15, 1983, A-1.
- (28) (Page 72) Reproduction of *La Presse*, August 15, 1983, A-1.
- (30) Bernie Brodtkin, president of Brodtkin Industries Ltd., quoted in Jennifer Robinson and Jay Bryan, “Union tables new proposal in garment strike talks,” *The Gazette*, August 17, 1983, A-1. Bernie’s likeness was taken from a photograph in this same article.
- (31) Lazar Peters, director of the 198-member Montreal Dress and Sportswear Manufacturers’ Guild, quoted and paraphrased in Jennifer Robinson, “Garment workers to vote in secret ballot,” *The Gazette*, August 22, 1983, A-1.
- (32) Ibid.
- (33) Gilles Gauthier, Québec ILGWU president, quoted in “Garment industry hit by first walkout.” Likeness based on a film still from CBC’s “Quebec garment workers’ first strike in four decades,” *CBC Digital Archives*, 1983.
- (34) Anonymous garment worker quoted in Jules Béliveau, “Les dirigeants de l’UIOVD acceptent une entente de principe,” *La Presse*, August 19, 1983, A-2.
- (35) Anonymous striker quoted in Jennifer Robinson, “Garment firms ease demands on strikers,” *The Gazette*, August 18, 1983, A-1.
- (36) Anonymous garment worker quoted in *ibid*.
- (37) Ibid. “Imports” comment adapted from “Les midinettes rejettent l’accord de principe,” *Le Devoir*, August 16, 1983, 2. Drawing based on photograph in Paul Roy, “Les grévistes du vêtement tonnent contre leur chef,” *La Presse*, August 20, 1983, A-1.



## **5.**

### ***BRASSAIT DE LA MERDE***

*One thing that struck me over and over in Vegas and almost everywhere else I worked for unions: workers want to make things better so badly that they are willing again and again to set aside frustration and anger stemming from past bad experiences with unions if you offer them a plan to win that makes them central participants.*

— Jane McAlevey (1)

*We are a group of garment workers fighting for a democratic, free and stronger union to better fight against employers. ...*

*We demand a general assembly for all workers so that together we can discuss actions to undertake to guarantee our right to work.*

*We demand a genuine law on plant closures and mass layoffs.*

*We demand a minimum of six months' notice before lay-offs and closures.*

*We demand an employment stabilization fund.*

*We demand the right for the union to consult bosses' books.*

*We demand the abolition of home work.*

*We demand that no work be sent out to non-unionized contractors.*

*Given the lack of a general assembly, the CATV invites you to an information session to discuss strategies to continue our struggle.*

— CATV (2)

UNIONIZED SEWERS LIKE FATIMA KNEW THEIR JOBS HAD AN EXPIRATION DATE. GARMENT BOSSES WERE USING EVERY TRICK IN THE BOOK TO RID THEMSELVES OF ORGANIZED LABOUR AS BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND THE UNION TURNED A BLIND EYE. TO FIGHT BACK, WOULD HAVE TO TAKE MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS. THEY WOULD HAVE TO STITCH TOGETHER!



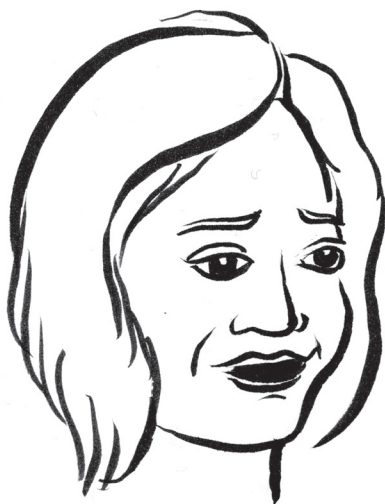
IN 1980, FATIMA AND AROUND 50 OTHER GARMENT WORKERS CHanneled THEIR FRUSTRATIONS INTO A UNION REFORM MOVEMENT, FORMING THE ACTION COMMITTEE FOR GARMENT WORKERS (CATV). THE GROUP WAS MULTIETHNIC AND INTERGENERATIONAL. ITS MEMBERS HAILED FROM PORTUGAL, GREECE, ITALY, HAITI, AND QUEBEC, AND RANGED IN AGE FROM 20 TO 55. MOST WERE WOMEN, AND MOST WERE SEWING MACHINE OPERATORS. (3)

AN ENORMOUS CRISIS IS HITTING THE GARMENT INDUSTRY AND WE ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF IT. EMPLOYERS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS ECONOMIC CRISIS TO ATTACK OUR RIGHTS. THE GROWING USE OF HOMEWORKERS HAS PROVOKED THE CLOSURE OF 159 SHOPS, CAUSING THE LOSS OF THOUSANDS OF ILGWU MEMBERS' JOBS AND DEPRIVING THE MEMBERSHIP OF THEIR ACQUIRED RIGHTS AND BENEFITS. (4)



CATV was unlike any previous attempt to remake the Quebec ILGWU. It was led by women and it was informed by both left-wing socialism and feminism. Its members understood first-hand how power was exercised in the industry, and their politics enabled them to articulate it. From their position at the receiving end, CATV was uniquely positioned to address the threat of homework and subcontracting. (5)

BUT THE ILGWU DOES NOT ENFORCE THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT. THE ILGWU IS AN ANTI-DEMOCRATIC UNION AND FORCES ITS MEMBERS TO DEFEND THEMSELVES ALONE. THIS IS WHY A COMMITTEE LIKE OURS, THE CATV, WAS BORN. WE AFFIRM THAT IT IS ONLY WORKERS ORGANIZED AT THE BASE THAT CAN WIN VICTORIES AGAINST EMPLOYERS. (6)\*



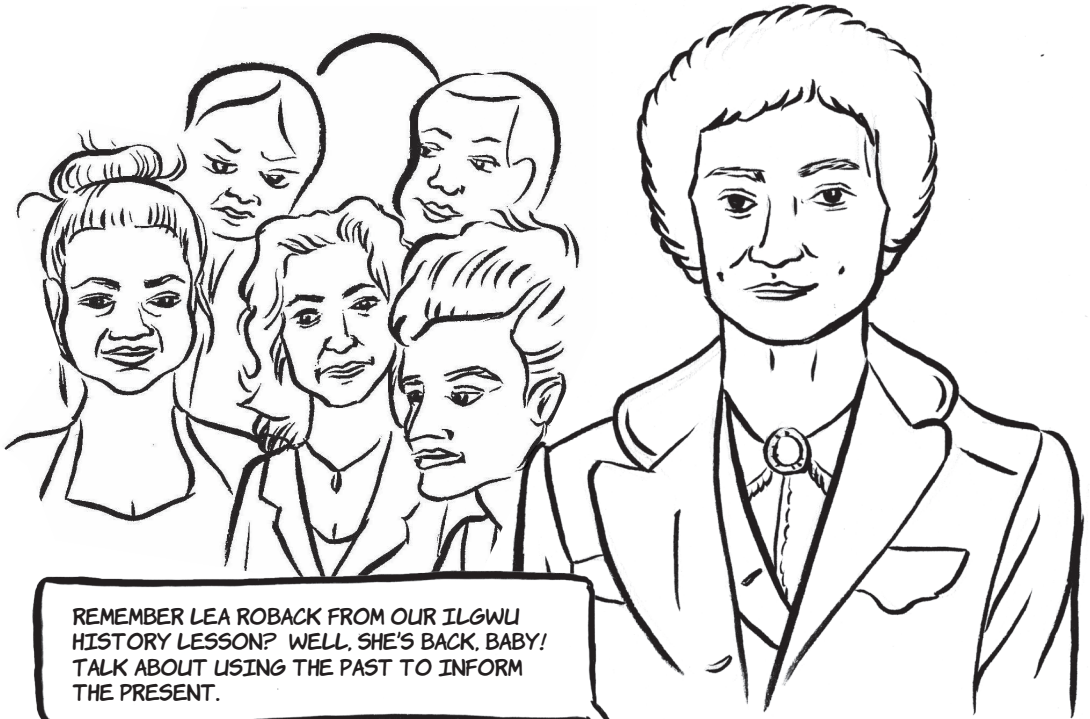
ON ÉTAIT DANS LE SYNDICAT QU'ON DÉNONÇAIT. MAIS DE L'AUTRE CÔTÉ ON LEUR DEMANDAIT DE NOUS FOURNIR. C'ÉTAIT TOUJOURS UN COMBAT. IL Y EN AVAIT QUELQUES-UNS, DES AGENTS, QUI ÉTAIENT DE NOTRE BORD.

---

\*This was not the first attempt to remake the Quebec ILGWU since the 1930s. In the 1960s, Quebec "moved into a period of rapid, state-sponsored modernization and secularization, which gave rise to a nationalist (and eventually, a separatist) movement that touched every aspect of social and union life." (7) Reformers seized on this mood, and the retirement of Bernard Shane in 1971, to "Francize" the American union. This is how French became the working language of the Quebec ILGWU. As the reformers became paid staffers, their other reform agendas fell by the wayside. Another push to democratize the union in 1975, this time led by Greek, Italian, and Quebecois cutters and pressers, met a similar fate. Neither of these movements involved women. (8)



CATV had its work cut out for it, but it also had battle-hardened mentors in the form of Lea Roback and Madeleine Parent, Quebec's best known feminist labour activist.



REMEMBER LEA ROBACK FROM OUR ILGWU HISTORY LESSON? WELL, SHE'S BACK, BABY! TALK ABOUT USING THE PAST TO INFORM THE PRESENT.



LÉA ROBACK. OK? C'EST UNE FEMME EXTRAORDINAIRE. UNE FÉMINISTE EXTRAORDINAIRE. ELLE ET MADELEINE PARENT C'ÉTAIT DEUX FEMMES EXTRAORDINAIRES. C'ÉTAIT DES FEMMES QUI M'ONT SOUTENU BEAUCOUP PARCE QUE L'HISTOIRE EST PAS TERMINÉE LÀ.

LÉA ROBACK A TRAVAILLÉ TRÈS FORT POUR SYNDIQUER LES FEMMES AU QUÉBEC. C'EST ELLE QUI A AIDÉ BEAUCOUP À ÉTABLIR LES SYNDICATS. MAIS APRÈS QUAND ON A VU LA CORRUPTION QUI A RENTRÉ LÀ-DEDANS. ... ÇA AVAIT PAS DE BON SENS. C'EST AVEC ELLE QU'ON AVAIT FAIT LE DOSSIER NOIR.

CATV's strategy was two-pronged: expose and organize. Its first order of business was to put together an exposé on the ILGWU and its manufacturers—what became the *Black Book on the ILGWU*. They planned to present it at the biennial congress of the Quebec Federation of Labour (Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec, or FTQ).

WE GIVE OURSELVES THE TASK OF MAKING OUR POSITION KNOWN. THE BLACK BOOK IS ONE WAY THAT WE CAN DO THIS THAT WILL BE VERY EFFECTIVE. IT CONSISTS OF MAKING CLEAR WHAT IS HAPPENING IN OUR UNION THROUGH DIFFERENT EXAMPLES THAT WE HAVE EXPERIENCED. IT MUST BE BRIEF, EXPLICIT, AND EASY TO READ. (9)



LE CATV A ÉTÉ CRÉÉ POUR FAIRE LE DOSSIER NOIR. POUR S'ORGANISER. ON ÉTAIT TRÈS, TRÈS CHOQUÉ PARCE QU'ON AVAIT PLEIN DE PROBLÈMES ET LE SYNDICAT NE NOUS DÉFENDAIT PAS. À UN MOMENT DONNÉ, LES FEMMES SE SONT ORGANISÉES POUR FAIRE QUELQUE CHOSE.

QUAND ON A FORMÉ LE COMITÉ, DONT LE FAMEUX CATV, C'ÉTAIT QU'ON AVAIT FAIT UN DOSSIER NOIR. ON A FAIT UN DOSSIER NOIR CONTRE LE SYNDICAT ET CONTRE LA COMPAGNIE. C'ÉTAIT SURTOUT PARCE QU'ON SE FAISAIT VRAIMENT AVOIR PAR LE SYNDICAT ET PAR LOUIS LABERGE ET TOUTE LA PATENTE LÀ.\* ON SE BATAIT CONTRE TOUT LE MONDE À L'ÉPOQUE.



\*The FTQ (Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec) is Quebec's largest labour federation. It was formed in 1957 and developed extensively under the presidency of Louis Laberge. According to everyone I interviewed, Laberge was a beloved figure among many Quebec workers.

Le CATV(Comité d'Action des Travailleurs du Vêtement)  
a organisé un réseau de communication.C'est très important car  
nous n'avons pas beaucoup de moyens pour se rejoindre.

Nous avons essayé d'évaluer les personnes que vous  
pourriez rejoindre facilement.Vous avez une liste de noms et de  
numéros de téléphones. d'un groupe de personnes. Il y a la respon  
sable deu réseau et vous qui avez cette liste.Elle doit demeurer  
secrète.Nous comprenez pourquoi.

Vous allez être rejoints par: *Cypstine Laviolette*

Son numéro de téléphone est: 729-8413

Vous connaissez sûrement d'autres personnes que vous  
pourriez rejoindre ou que les personnes dans votre liste pourraient  
rejoindre.C'est important de demander aux personnes que vous avez  
dans votre liste qui ils peuvent rejoindre ou informer. C'est de  
cette façon que nous allons élargir le réseau et consolider notre  
comité.Mais il est essentiel que vous informiez la personne qui  
vous rejoins de ces changements. (*Cypstine*)

MONIQUE Baulieu  
CARMEN Latour  
FRANÇOISE 2

1) Femme combattive de To Shop.

2) Grace (la portugaise)

3) Hélène Ricci 323-5327 } *Simple Dress*

4) Lise Courville

5) Mme O'maney

RODRIGUEZ

MARIA

MICHELLE

Mardi, 20 octobre 1981

# PROPOSITION D'ORDRE DU JOUR POUR LA RENCONTRE

1) Adoption d'un président d'assemblée pour diriger la rencontre.  
proposition: Anne-Marie Mathieu

2) Adoption d'un secrétaire  
proposition: Yven Cassety

3) Adoption de l'ordre du jour.

la rencontre: présenté par Anne-Marie Mathieu (15 m.)

on et adoption de la plate-forme. (1.30 min.)

de la plate-forme.

on et adoption de la partie 1 et 2 - (20 min.)

on et adoption de la partie 3 et 4- (40 min.)

on et adoption de la partie 5 et 6- (20 min.)

d'un comité de direction ( 60 min.)

Plan d'action: (60 min.)

Discussion sur l'importance de faire connaître notre position

pour a) protéger le mouvement

b) pour élargir le regroupement

c) pour aller chercher l'appui dans le mouvement syndicat  
et dans le public.

## Moyens proposés:

1) que le comité fasse un tract pour informer les travailleurs  
dans le secteur.

2) que nous fassions une conférence de presse.

3) que nous fassions un dossier noir.

4) rejoindre des membres de l'extérieur de la ville- Beauce-

5) voir si la résolution peut-être appuyé par un exécutif ou  
des gens à l'intérieur des structures de l'UIOVD.

REMEMBER HOW  
ILUNTW WAS ABLE  
TO ORGANIZE THE  
DRESS SECTOR IN  
THE 1930S BECAUSE  
THEIR SHOP  
FLOOR APPROACH  
TO UNIONISM  
RESONATED WITH  
WOMEN WORKERS?

YEAH! ILUNTW FOCUSED ON DAY-  
TO-DAY WORKPLACE ISSUES THAT  
AFFECTED THEM—PIECEWORK  
RATES, ARBITRARY DISTRIBUTION  
AND SPEED-UP OF WORK, WORKING  
CONDITIONS...

15  
120  
120  
120  
1  
1  
505h





THE IUNTW WAS MORE DEMOCRATIC [THAN THE ILGWU] BECAUSE WE USED TO HAVE LOCAL MEETINGS SET UP TWICE A MONTH. TWICE A MONTH WE WOULD MEET, REGARDLESS OF FOR WHAT, AND THEN WE USED TO HAVE SHOP MEETINGS. WITH THE PROBLEMS IN THE SHOP, WE USED TO CALL THE ENTIRE SHOP TOGETHER AND DISCUSS THE PROBLEM THAT'S FACING THEM, AND SO ON. THERE USED TO BE FIGHTS BETWEEN THE WORKING PEOPLE IN THE SHOPS. WE USED TO CALL A SHOP MEETING TO STRAIGHTEN IT OUT... THE INDUSTRIAL UNION WAS DIFFERENT BECAUSE A MEETING OF THE SHOP TAKES IN ALL THE PRESSERS, CUTTERS, FINISHERS AND OPERATORS, YOU KNOW. (13)\*

COMITE D'ACTION DES TRAVAILLEURS DU VETEMENT (CATV)

ORDRE DU JOUR - 3 novembre 1981

- 1) Accepter que la réunion finisse à 10 heures
- 2) Résumé de la première rencontre du CATV
  - qui a été élu au Comité de Coordination du CATV
  - le programme d'action du CATV
  - la résolution présentée à la FTQ
- PERIODE DE DISCUSSION
- 3) Les développements positifs
  - au niveau des Conseils de Travail.
  - au niveau du Comité de Condition Féminine de la FTQ.
  - au niveau de l'exécutif des coupeurs.
  - association des travailleurs grecs.
  - dossier noir.

4) TACHES

- diffusion du tract.
- lecture de la résolution ; pourcentage

\*If Steedman is right that labour's withdrawal from the shop floor "marked the end of a form of unionism that had drawn women into trade union activism," then CATV's organizing efforts marked a resurgence. (15)



## DOSSIER NOIR SUR L'UIOVD

Nous nous donnons comme tâche de faire connaître notre position. Le DOSSIER NOIR est un moyen que nous pouvons nous donner et qui est très efficace.

Il consiste à faire connaître ce qui se passe dans notre syndicat à travers différents exemples que nous avons vécus. IL DOIT ETRE BREF, EXPLICIT ET FACILE A LIRE RAPIDEMENT.

Nous pourrions l'utiliser lors de conférences de presse mais nous devons d'abord viser à rejoindre par ce dossier les délégués qui seront présents au Congrès de la FTQ. Ceci est très important car nous avons une résolution au Congrès mais nous n'avons pas vraiment de délégués de l'UIOVD pour la défendre sur le plancher du Congrès. D'une part, la résolution résume la situation mais ne l'explique pas. Elle est limitée à 300 mots. D'autre part, nous devons nous appuyer sur les délégués d'autres syndicats pour nous soutenir. Ils ont besoin qu'on les informe bien pour être en mesure de nous appuyer.

Le dossier doit être prêt et acheminé vers les différents syndicats et comité de travail au plus tard le 30 octobre. Nous joindrons la résolution que nous avons au Congrès et une lettre demandant aux divers affiliés d'appuyer notre résolution et de nous soutenir sur le plancher du Congrès. Ainsi avant le Congrès nous aurons déjà un grand appui dans différentes délégations syndicales.

CE DOSSIER NOIR SUR L'UIOVD REPRESENTE UNE TRAVAIL ENORME ET DEMANDE D'AVOIR UNE TRES BONNE ORGANISATION POUR POUVOIR LE REALISER DANS DES DELAIS AUSSI SERRES.

Nous avons des suggestions au niveau des points que nous devrions aborder (qui risquent de toucher particulièrement les délégués) et sur les personnes qui pourraient y travailler. Chaque partie ne doit pas avoir plus d'une page, ce qui donnerait un dossier complet d'une dizaine de pages. C'est très important que ce ne soit pas trop long sinon le dossier ne serait pas lu. Il faut voir la quantité énorme de paperasse qui circule avant et durant un Congrès.

### DOSSIER NOIR SUR L'UIOVD

- 1) L'absence de vie syndicale - nous voulons montrer qu'il n'y a pas de démocratie, pas d'assemblées, pas d'information, pas d'éducation et que les présidents(tes) d'ateliers n'ont pas de pouvoir. Fatima Rocchia
- 2) Le travail à la pièce: dénoncer comme système de paiement - les prix baissent toujours et que la direction de l'UIOVD ne prend aucun moyens pour empêcher ça. Berthe Marcotte - Cyslaine Laviolette

### DOSSIER NOIR SUR L'UIOVD (suite)

3) Travail à la pièce: montrer comment le syndicat ne fait pas respecter les minimums. Madeleine St-Georges, Collette Poitras

4) Collusion avec le patronat: L'affaire de Boivert

5) Les pensions: dénoncer le système Noella Ouillette

6) La maternité: conditions faites aux femmes qui ont des enfants dans l'industrie et comment le syndicat ne fait rien. Johanne Al-Amin

7) Les salaires: St-Jean de Matha: comment le syndicat n'a pas défendu les augmentations de salaires auxquelles les femmes avaient droit. Rita-Collette

8) Le droit au travail: Marbrooke: comment le syndicat n'a pas défendu ce droit. Diane Belhumeur

Nous proposons Collette Poitras et(?) pour être en charge de la

## MENSONGES DE L'UIOVD

Dans un texte qui vous a été remis, tente de répondre à notre Dossier noir. Ne congres de papperasse, mais nous voulons des vérités pour vous permettre de prendre

### SOMMES-NOUS UN PETIT NOMBRE DE DISSIDENTS

La résolution 13 qui figure dans le cahier généralement dans plusieurs dizaines d'ateliers de la province. Plusieurs centaines d'ont l'ont endossée. Elle continue de circuler et de l'Union. Quant au local des opérateurs du comité, il regroupe plusieurs membres émanant cependant de travailleurs de différents locaux.

### L'UIOVD A-T-ELLE COLLABORE PLEINEMENT AVEC ET CEUX DE LA CECO MAINTENANT?

Non. La FTQ, à l'époque, a eu du mal à demander à ceux qui ont travaillé à l'époque

Ce n'est pas parce que le rapport de la FTQ à l'époque, ni parce que la CECO n'a pas que la direction de notre union est irrégulière au Conseil général: "Il y a trop feu..."

### TOUT LE MONDE DOIT-IL ETRE MIS DANS LE MEME

Non. Il existait et il existe encore des possibilités pour défendre les membres. Mais ils sont parfois congédiés, comme Campeau et Narcisse Jove. Dans d'autres cas ou bien leur influence est limitée à quelques tralises par la direction.

### L'UIOVD NEGOCIE-T-ELLE CONVENABLEMENT?

On nous parle longuement du régime d'assurance retraite. La lecture de notre dossier noir que constitue le régime supplémentaire des pour une compagnie d'assurance, a simplement

- une clause de congé-maternité
- des congés de maladie
- un véritable plan de pension
- une clause de santé et de sécurité
- l'élimination du travail à la pièce

C'est aussi une porte grande partir des ateliers non-synd

### L'UIOVD FAIT-ELLE DES GRIEFS?

Depuis un an, oui. Des membres la FTQ et ont découvert que ça n'est pas de formule de grief à l' n'est pas automatique. Ce n'est On fait une sélection.

### LA VIE SYNDICALE? L'INFORMATION?

La dernière assemblée générale fut il n'y a pas d'assemblée régulière thématique pour chaque atelier. Les Des milliers de membres n'ont jamais

Quant aux cours d'éducation syndicale. l'an dernier. Mais, cette année, aucun de cette année. Il y a de tout, sauf à être déterminée, alors qu'on, sauf

Le Comité de

## DVD

## POINTS?

EC LES ENQUETEURS DE LA FTQ EN 1976

ME SAC A L'UIOVD?

ouverte au travail à donner, puisque c'est à  
qu'est distribué le travail.

et des permanents ont suivi des cours de  
existait. Mais, il y a un an, il n'existait  
l'UIOVD. Encore là, la procédure de grief  
pas n'importe qui qui peut faire un grief

L'EDUCATION SYNDICALE?

celle de la ratification du dernier contrat.  
Il n'y a surtout pas d'assemblée sys-  
journal ne paraît pratiquement jamais.  
vu la convention collective.

POURQUOI NOUS AVONS CHOISI UNE TUTELLE DE LA FTQ  
PLUTOT QU'UNE TUTELLE GOUVERNEMENTALE?

Depuis des années et des années, les membres discutent et cherchent comment se sortir des problèmes qui pèsent très lourd sur leurs épaules.

La situation est pire que jamais. Le chômage est criant pour des milliers de femmes, de presseur (es) et très bientôt des centaines de coupeurs vont se retrouver sur le banc. Notre travail est-avoyé sort de nos ateliers pour s'en aller à domicile où à forfait. Nos salaires, particulièrement ceux des femmes à la pièce, baissent terriblement. Notre système de pension est frauduleux, pourri.

Face à cette situation, nous devons nous organiser. Nous devons nous unir, nous défendre, nous protéger. Nous devons nous battre.

Face à cette situation désastreuse, il est clair que notre direction syndicale collabore avec les patrons et ne nous défend pas. Notre union est dans un état de décomposition avancée. L'UTOVD est menacée de tutelle gouvernementale imminente. Jamais nous n'avons pu discuter en assemblée de la position que les membres devraient adopter face à ces problèmes.

Les membres voulant s'en sortir. Mais comment faire?  
 FORCER LA DIRECTION DE L'UIOVD A NOUS DONNER DES ASSEMBLEES. Nous  
 de ~~de~~ prendre en main notre syndicat. CETTE QUESTION CONCERNE TOUT  
 LE MONDE - PAS SEULEMENT M. FONTAINE. C'EST NOTRE AVENIR QUIA EST  
 EN JEU.

Des travailleurs du vêtement se sont organisés en comité pour débattre de la meilleure voie à suivre et ont adopté un programme d'action. En publiant sa position le CATV ( ) veut contribuer au débat qu'il faut mener dans nos rangs.

travailleurs du K1

A NOUS D'AGIR?

En demandant à la FTQ de soumettre l'UIOVD à une tutelle, Le Comité d'Action des Travailleurs du Vêtement veut que les travailleurs aient les pouvoir, dans un avenir rapproché, DE CONSTRUIRE UN SYNDICAT QUI LES DEFENDS.

Nous ne voulons plus "d'une union" de connivence avec le patronat. Nous voulons un SYNDICAT PROPRE. Nous voulons une direction honnête que les membres peuvent contrôler.


la tutelle sur l'UIOVD a été acheminée au Congrès de la FTQ par le SCFP (local 315). Des délégués au Congrès et des travailleurs d'autres syndicats appuient notre action. Ils vont soutenir notre résolution sur le plancher du Congrès. Comme le disait un délégué, " Nous le faisons par solidarité avec les travailleurs du vêtement. Vos conditions de travail sont effrayantes et votre direction est corrompu. Il faut que ça change."

LE CONGRÈS DE LA FICQ A LIEU DANS MOINS D'UN MOIS.  
C'EST UNE OCCASION POUR AGIR. IL FAUT SE PRÉPARER. IL FAUT OBLIGER  
la direction de l'UNION à nous donner des assemblées. Nous devons  
débatte démocratiquement de ce qu'il faut faire pour reprendre en  
main notre syndicat et défendre nos droits. C'est seulement en  
s'organisant, des centaines, des milliers de travailleurs du vêtement  
qui nous pourrons arriver à quelque chose.

Le Congrès de la FTQ aura lieu du 16 au 20 novembre 1981  
au Quenn Elisabeth-  
Venez nous y rejoindre! *à cette position de CATV.*

Si vous êtes d'accord, dites-le.  
LE CATV va faire circuler  
la résolution que ~~est~~ <sup>sera</sup> présente  
au congrès. Si vous la souhaitez, signez-la.






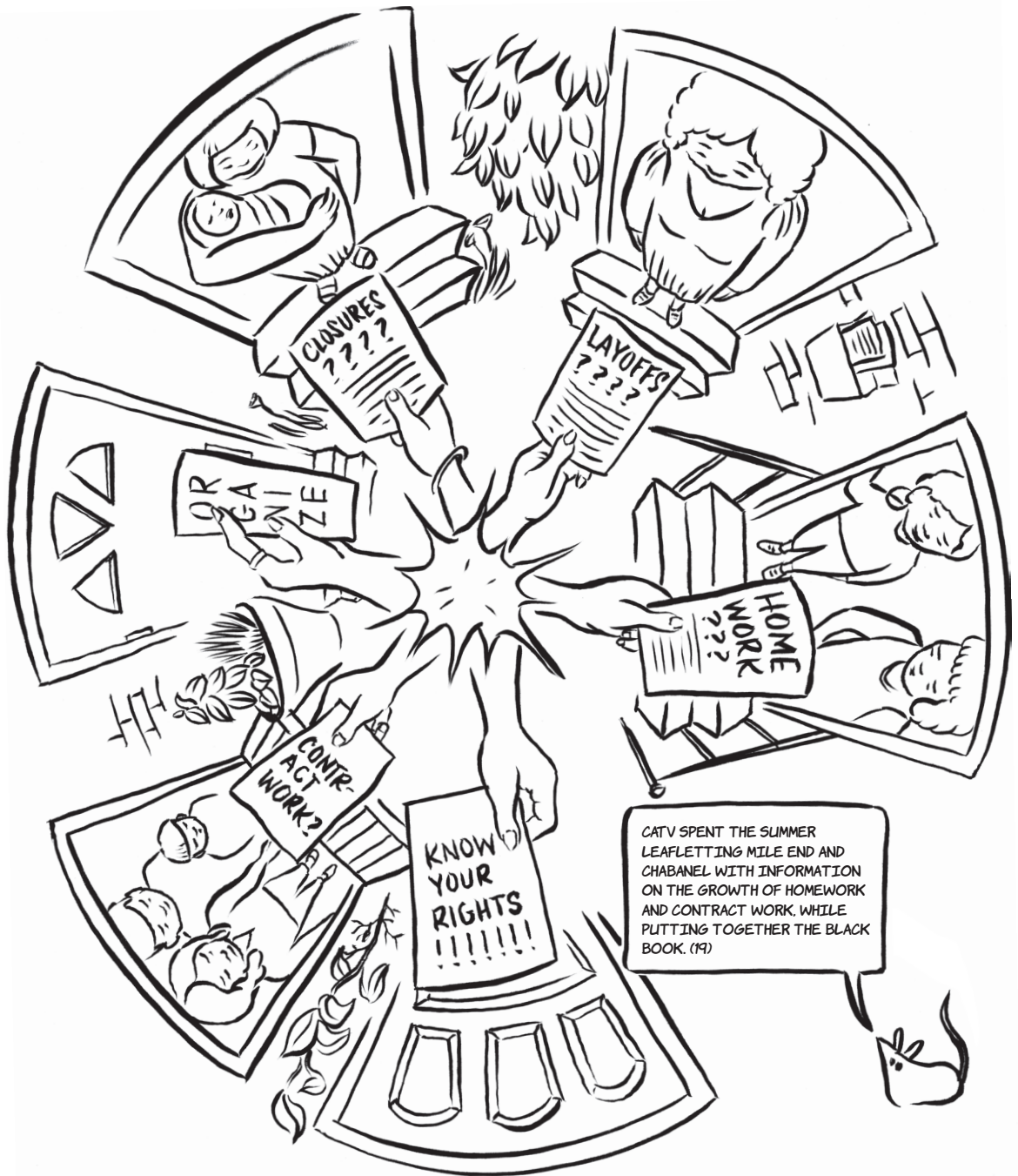
IN THE SPRING OF 1981, CATV EXPOSED A BACKROOM DEAL BETWEEN ILGWU AND MARBROOKE CORPORATION ALLOWING IT TO FIRE ITS UNIONIZED SEWERS AND FARM OUT THE WORK, PROVIDED IT KEPT ITS CUTTERS.

CATV MOBILIZED 6000 WORKERS FOR AN ILLEGAL STRIKE AROUND THIS ISSUE. UNION BRASS THREATENED TO BRING IN THE POLICE AND THE STRIKE WAS HALTED AFTER ONE DAY. (18)

SOUND FAMILIAR? THIS IS THE RESTRUCTURING STRATEGY GLEN DESCRIBED EARLIER.











WORKERS SUFFER UNDER THE PRESSURE FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, WHICH IS AGGRAVATING THE SITUATION BY ALLOWING EMPLOYERS TO EVADE OUR MARKET BY IMPORTING CLOTHING AND INVESTING \$250 MILLION FOR THE MODERNIZATION AND PRE-RETIREMENT (DISGUISED UNEMPLOYMENT). THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGES HOMEWORK BY REFUSING TO APPLY THE LAW. THE AVERAGE SALARY FOR WORK AT HOME IS \$2.94 AN HOUR. (21)\*

---

\*CATV recognized that if deindustrialization could no longer be halted, it could at least be managed in different ways. A comparison of early and late coalfield closures in Scotland powerfully illustrates this. Historian Jim Phillips found that pit closures in the 1950s were negotiated in line with communal expectations, and thus broadly accepted, whereas later closures under Thatcher violated these norms, provoking moral outrage and fuelling nationalist sentiment. Phillips finds a similar trend in the Scottish shipbuilding industry, where a project of carefully managed deindustrialization was abruptly ceded to market fundamentalism in the 1980s. (22)





C'ÉTAIT VRAIMENT  
QUELQUE CHOSE,  
C'ÉTAIT TOUT UN  
DOSSIER. POUR  
LES PETITES  
"MIDINETTES," QU'ILS  
NOUS APPELAIENT,  
À L'ÉPOQUE...

### ***PREGNANCY, A DISEASE***

In their 1978 collective agreement, the ILGWU and its manufacturers agreed that "maternity leave must be treated as a disease." To this, CATV says: "We are 80% women in the garment industry. Our union leadership considers pregnancy a disease. The union executive are the ones with the disease!" More importantly, the maternity leave negotiated by the union is largely theoretical. In practice, pregnant workers are fired or forced to quit.

### ***THE STAGGERING HISTORY OF OUR PENSION FUNDS***

Over its 47 years in Quebec, the ILGWU paid full pensions to only 1,850 people. Absurd eligibility requirements are designed to leave most workers behind. Those lucky enough to qualify receive a paltry \$185 per month from a welfare fund worth over \$8 million.

### ***THE BOISVERT CASE***

An infamous corruption scandal involving manufacturer Raymond Boisvert and ILGWU director Robert Fontaine illustrates the extent of the industry's rot. In the late 1970s, Boisvert accrued over \$500,000 in fines owed to the union's welfare fund for illegally contracting out work. When Boisvert threatened to take his business elsewhere, Fontaine quietly cancelled the debt. According to Boisvert, Fontaine was ready to pay almost any price for his collaboration, including lowering workers' wages.

### ***THE DEAD END OF A HISTORIC WALKOUT***

In the spring of 1981, ILGWU quietly allowed Marbrooke Corporation to illegally fire its unionized sewers and contract out the work, provided they retain their cutters. This issue "goes to the heart of the industry's problems," and CATV was able to quickly mobilize a wildcat strike around it. On June 22, 6,000 ILGWU workers walked off the job. Fontaine ordered them to return to work. Marbrooke downsized as planned and the job loss avalanche continued.

### ***WHERE IS THE FUTURE OF WOMEN IN THE GARMENT INDUSTRY! AT HOME?***

The Quebec government estimates at least 20,000 garment workers now work from home. CATV links this resurgence to the closure of 159 factories and the loss of almost 2,000 Quebec ILGWU members in 6 months. Homework disempowers all garment workers by offering a ridiculously low common denominator. Underscoring this is the testimony of a homemaker who left the factory only to find herself working much more for much less, isolated from other workers and without basic rights and protections.

---

\*This is my bare-bones summary of the chapters of the Black Book.

## ***WOMEN SEW, THE UNION POCKETS***

Reproduction of a September 1981 article in *Chatelaine* about Fatima's legal battles with Sample Dress and ILGWU's failure to defend her.

### ***PIECE WORK: AN INHUMANE SYSTEM***

CATV condemns piece work as an inhumane system designed to maximize profit by creating conflict and competition among workers in a race to the bottom. "Piece work is a vicious circle, and it's impossible to get out of it. By going faster, to get better salaries, we're always producing more, it's clear. When we get to make good salaries, because we worked like crazy people, the bosses cut the base prices for dresses, by saying that the price they gave us were too good."

### ***"A SIMPLE MISTAKE"***

According to CATV, the 1980 contract negotiated by the ILGWU on behalf of its members was a farce. Pleading "inexperience," union executives failed to close loopholes around paid vacation and "forgot" to initial clauses around wage increases. As a result, these concessions were dead on arrival. Many workers would now have to wait until 1983 for a wage increase.

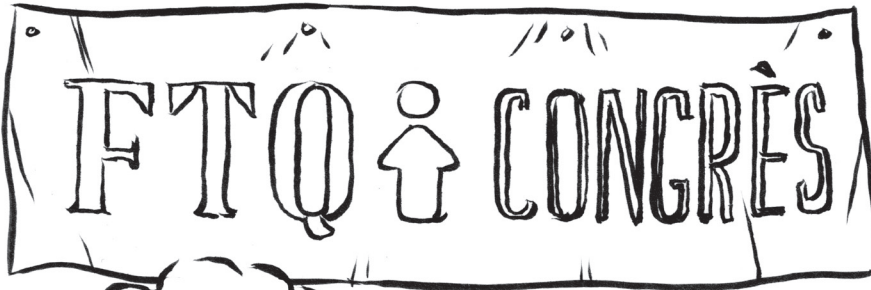
For almost a year following, ILGWU workers in Saint Jean de Matha called on their union to back their demand for the promised wage increase. They were ignored. In June 1981, the women stopped work and got on a bus to Montreal to confront their union leaders in person. After much stalling, their case was finally put to arbitration. Because their walkout was considered illegal, the women had no financial support in the form of strike funds or EI while they waited four months for a judgment. "The decision: 'Nothing justifies the demand for increased wages of operators in Saint Jean de Matha.'"



WE TOUCHED ON GENDER RELATIONS IN THE ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY EARLIER. COWIE'S HISTORY OF THE RCA'S MANY RELOCATIONS OFFERS SOME INTERESTING PARALLELS. RCA SHIFTED ITS MANUFACTURING ACROSS THE US AND FINALLY TO MEXICO IN SEARCH OF "CHEAP AND DOCILE" LABOUR. LIKE GARMENT INDUSTRIALISTS, RCA "REINFORCED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIGHLY SKILLED, HIGH-TECHNOLOGY 'MALE' WORK AND LOW-SKILLED, LABOUR-INTENSIVE 'FEMALE' WORK BY SEPARATING THE TWO LABOR PROCESSES NOT JUST ON THE SHOP FLOOR BUT BY REGION AND NATION AS WELL." (24) BY PITTING "MILITANCY" IN ONE REGION AGAINST "DOCILITY" IN ANOTHER, AND "SKILLED" MEN AGAINST "LOW-SKILLED" WOMEN, THE COMPANY FRACTURED SOLIDARITY AT EVERY LEVEL. (25)

UNLIKE CATV, RCA WORKERS OPPOSED PLANT CLOSURES BY DRAWING ON A STRONG SENSE OF LOCAL COMMUNITY. IN COWIE'S VIEW, THIS WAS BOTH AN ASSET AND A LIABILITY—IT STRENGTHENED SOCIAL BONDS, BUT IT ALSO PREVENTED "A MORE EXPANSIVE NOTION OF WORKING-CLASS POLITICS IN AN ERA IN WHICH CAPITAL TRANSCENDS BOUNDARIES WITH COMPLETE EASE." (26) MONTREAL GARMENT WORKERS DIDN'T HAVE THIS RESOURCE AT THEIR DISPOSAL. AS A MOTLEY CREW OF IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN A BIG CITY, THEIR STARTING POINT WAS SOCIAL DIFFERENCE. CATV'S WORK IS PROOF OF CONCEPT FOR LABOUR MOVEMENTS "BASED ON THE EXPLOITATIVE NATURE OF CAPITALIST RELATIONS... AND NOT ON PAROCHIALISM AND EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT TO PLACE." (27) AS INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM CONTINUES TO BUY TIME BY CAPTURING A SPACE, PITTING PLACE AGAINST PLACE IN A RACE TO THE BOTTOM, THIS BECOMES EVER MORE CRUCIAL.

The day of the FTQ congress finally arrived. CATV released its Black Book and circulated a resolution demanding that the FTQ put the ILGWU into receivership. The FTQ refused and within a week, nine CATV militants were fired from their jobs. (28)



WE DO NOT WANT A  
GOVERNMENT RECEIVERSHIP  
THAT IS ONLY INTERESTED IN  
ADMINISTRATIVE INTEGRITY  
AND PARALYZES UNION LIFE.  
WE WANT A RECEIVERSHIP OF  
THE FTQ THAT AIMS TO GIVE  
CONTROL OF THE UNION BACK  
TO ITS MEMBERS AND REVIVE  
UNION LIFE. (29)

## Des travailleurs du vêtement réclament la mise en tutelle de leur syndicat par la FTQ

### 17<sup>e</sup> congrès général Une semaine fertile en événements pour la FTQ

(R.D.) — «C'est quand les congrès s'annoncent des plus plates que généralement ils sont fertiles en rebondissement et, peut-être que celui qui commence demain (aujourd'hui) sera l'un des congrès les plus bizarres dans l'histoire de la FTQ».

C'est un peu dans cet esprit que les organisateurs du 17<sup>e</sup> congrès général de la FTQ abordaient hier les premiers jours de l'assemblée.

Le Comité d'action des travailleurs du vêtement a rendu public hier un document intitulé «Dossier noir sur l'Union internationale des ouvriers du vêtement pour dames» par lequel il entend démontrer la nécessité de la mise en tutelle de l'UIOVD par la FTQ.

La présidente du CATV (créé récemment), Mme Mireille Trotter, soutient l'urgence d'une telle mesure en raison des insatisfactions de plusieurs membres envers le Comité, d'accusa-

faits (injustices dans l'administration des fonds de pension, par exemple) qui tentent de jeter le discrédit sur le C.A.T.V.



M. François Bullock et Mlle Anne-Marie Mathieu, porte-parole du C.A.T.V., entourant la présidente du regroupement, Mme Mireille Trotter.

But the Black Book did have an effect. In the wake of its revelations, two top union executives were removed and replaced with a reform group under Gilles Gauthier. Several CATV members were offered paid union positions but all refused. (31)\*



\*Mumme claims “they felt more effective and freer outside of the official structure.” (32) Fatima told me she felt the union was irredeemable by that point.



C'ÉTAIT LA MAFIA, COMPLÈTEMENT. QUAND ON A FAIT LE DOSSIER NOIR EN QUESTION, ON EST ENTRÉ DANS UNE GUERRE ENTRE LA MAFIA JUIVE ET LA MAFIA ITALIENNE QUI S'EST ÉTABLIE. QUI ÉTAIT DANS LES SYNDICATS. C'ÉTAIT AFFREUX. JE RESTAIS SUR LA RUE CHATEAUBRIAND, PRÈS DU MÉTRO JEAN-TALON, ET J'AVAIS UNE BEDAINE, UNE GROSSE BEDAINE; ET À UN MOMENT DONNÉ JE SORS DU MÉTRO ET IL Y A UN MAFIOSO QUI M'A SUIVI. JE NE POUVAIS PAS COURIR. JE NE POUVAIS PAS COURIR, J'AVAIS UNE BEDAINE ÉNORME. JE RESTAIS BEAUCOUP CHEZ NOUS APRÈS. JE NE SORTAIS PAS DANS LES RENCONTRES QU'IL Y AVAIT POUR ORGANISER...





Gauthier's team announced major structural reforms. CATV was sceptical, noting their conspicuous silence on homework and contract work. (33)

The following summer, this same leadership allowed garment contractors to void a \$6,000,000 debt owed to the union's welfare funds for subcontracting violations. (34)




CATV's work continued. For International Women's Day in 1982, they organized a week's worth of educational activities in and around the garment district. They leafletted about homework and contract work, and held evening information sessions on health and safety, and on the ILGWU's history. They were preparing the ground ... (35)\*



---

\*Fatima's voice dripped with disgust whenever she spoke of the Quebec ILGWU. This is understandable—the boss, a class enemy, can't betray you the way a self-described friend can. This makes it all the more impressive that CATV were able to critically uphold their union, using its radical beginnings to inform their struggle. Situating workers within an arc of labour history is also a powerful organizing strategy—it can move people from feeling like objects of exploitation to subjects of history.



THIS WAS NEW FOR MOST GARMENT WORKERS. THE ILGWU RARELY HELD MEETINGS AND WOULD NOT TRANSLATE CONTRACTS INTO THE LANGUAGES OF ITS MEMBERS. (36)

WASN'T THAT ANOTHER WAY IULTW WAS ABLE TO ATTRACT WOMEN WORKERS IN THE 1930S? BY OFFERING A BROADER SOCIAL COMMUNITY FROM WHICH TO DRAW SUPPORT?

EXACTLY. AND ROSE PESOTTA BROUGHT THAT LESSON TO THE ORGANIZING SHE DID FOR THE QUEBEC ILGWU IN THE LATE 1930S.

ROSE : THE CARE WITH WHICH I ARRANGED FOR FEEDING THE STRIKERS HAD A DEFINITE PURPOSE BEHIND IT. I WANTED IT KNOWN THAT THE ILGWU PROVIDED WELL FOR MEMBERS INVOLVED IN A DISPUTE. IN THE MORNING WE HAD FRUIT, EGGS ANY STYLE, SWEET ROLLS, AND COFFEE. AND DURING THE DAY HOT DRINKS WERE READY WHENEVER THE PICKETS CAME IN FOR A RESPITE FROM THE BITTER COLD. AND I WENT OUT OF MY WAY TO GET DELICACIES FOR LUNCH, STARTING WITH SHRIMP COCKTAIL AND ENDING WITH CHOCOLATE LAYER CAKE AND ICE CREAM. (37)

JE POUVAIS TRADUIRE BEAUCOUP DE CHOSES, ON AVAIT FAIT DES TRACTES POUR DISTRIBUER UN PEU PARTOUT DANS LA VILLE, ET IL FALLAIT LES DISTRIBUER. ON ALLAIT RENCONTRER DES FEMMES ITALIENNES À UN ENDROIT, LES PORTUGAISES DANS L'AUTRE, LES GRECQUES DANS L'AUTRE. LÀ IL FALLAIT TRADUIRE DE PORTUGAIS AU GREC ET ON AVAIT UNE ITALIENNE QUI TRADUISAIT EN ANGLAIS. ÉCOUTE, LE MESSAGE, DES FOIS, IL ÉTAIT PAS TOUT À FAIT RENDU. C'ÉTAIT UNE GANG ACTIVE. ON AVAIT DES GENS VRAIMENT ACTIFS. JE SUIS PASSÉE À LA TÉLÉVISION AVEC JANETTE BERTRAND POUR LA JOURNÉE INTERNATIONALE DE LA FEMME ...



## NOTES

- (1) Jane McAlevey, *Raising Expectations (and Raising Hell): My Decade Fighting for the Labor Movement* (London: Verso, 2012), 164.
- (2) From a CATV draft document titled “Fermetures? Mise-a-pied? Chomage,” date unknown, Fatima’s personal papers.
- (3) Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 60. Confirmed by Fatima.
- (4) CATV, “Fermetures? Mise-a-pied? Chomage.”
- (5) Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 60. Confirmed by Fatima.
- (6) CATV, “Fermetures? Mise-a-pied? Chomage.”
- (7) Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 59.
- (8) Ibid.
- (9) CATV Black Book planning document, date unknown, Fatima’s personal papers.
- (10) (Page 85) Image: reproduced from a pamphlet titled *Guide pour la mise sur pied d’un comite de condition feminine*, (Québec: Syndicat canadien de la fonction publique, year unknown), 13 (from Fatima’s personal papers).
- (11) (Page 86) Images left to right: Template letter to establish CATV communication network, year unknown; CATV meeting agenda, “Proposition d’ordre du jour pour la recontre,” October 20, 1981 (both from Fatima’s personal papers).
- (12) (Page 87) Photograph: “Second Convention of the IUNTW, Toronto, 1931,” photograph, 1931 (Multicultural Collection, Ontario Archives), in Steedman, “The Promise,” 59.
- (13) Max Dolgoy quoted in Steedman, “The Promise,” 37.
- (14) (Page 87) Image: CATV meeting agenda, “Ordre du jour - 3 November 1981,” November 3, 1981, Fatima Rocchia’s personal papers.
- (15) Steedman, *Angels*, 237.
- (16) (Pages 88-89) Images left to right, top to bottom: CATV Black Book planning document, year unknown; CATV draft document, “Mesonges et demi-verites de l’UIOVD,” year unknown; CATV draft document, “Pourquoi nous avons choisi une tutelle de la FTQ plutot qu’une tutelle gouvernementale,” year unknown; CATV draft document, “A nous d’agir,” year unknown (all from Fatima’s personal papers).
- (17) (Page 90) Photograph: reproduced from *Les travailleuses et l’acces a la syndicalisation: Etats generaux des travailleuses salariees quebecoises*, Québec: Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN), year unknown, 52 (from Fatima’s personal papers).

(18) Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 61.

(19) Ibid.

(20) (Page 92) Image: reproduced from *Vie Ouvrière* 32, no. 160 (Mar 1982): 14 (from Fatima’s personal papers).

(21) From CATV, “Fermetures? Mise-à-pied? Chomage,” trans. Lauren Laframboise, Montreal, 2019.

(22) Jim Phillips, “The Moral Economy of Deindustrialization in Post-1945 Scotland,” in *The Deindustrialized World: Confronting Ruination in Post Industrial Places*, eds. Steven High, Lachlan MacKinnon, and Andrew Perchard (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017), 314-315, 320, 322-325, 327.

(23) (Page 93) Image: cover page of CATV’s *Dossier noir sur l’UIOVD*.

(24) Cowie, *Capital Moves*, 5.

(25) Ibid., 8.

(26) Ibid., 182.

(27) Soja, “The Socio-Spatial Dialectic,” *Annals of the Associations of American Geographers* 70, no. 2 (1980): 224.

(28) Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 62.

(29) CATV, “Mesonges et demi-verites de l’UIOVD.”

(30) (Page 96) Image: newspaper clipping from Fatima’s personal papers, name and date unknown (my best guess is *La Presse*).

(31) Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 62.

(32) Ibid.

(33) Ibid.

(34) Ibid., 63.

(35) Ibid.

(36) Ibid., 63.

(37) Rose Pesotta quoted in Mercedes Steedman, *Angels*, 246.



## **6.**

### ***STRIKE OF PRIDE***

*We have forgotten the crucial need to trust workers, to educate them about power and how it works, to educate them in the heat of a fight—which is where most adults learn best, when the stakes are high, not low.*

– Jane McAlevey (1)

*Solidarity is made and remade. It never just is.*

– Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2)

On August 3rd, 1983, the industry's previous three-year collective agreement expired. Arriving at the bargaining table, the owners of union shops, represented by the Montreal Dress and Sportswear Manufacturers' Guild, asked their employees for a long list of concessions to "save the dying industry." (3)



The Guild blamed the ILGWU for not unionizing non-union contract shops. At the same time, it asked for the formal right to farm out work to those non-union shops (something they were already doing).

Even for the weary union executives, this contract proposal was tough to swallow. Gilles Gauthier and his team thought they could frighten the Guild into backpedaling their demands by holding a vote to strike. It was unlikely that they would have to follow through—as our mouse pointed out earlier, the union rarely held meetings and failed to translate its contracts. Instead, some 8,000 workers showed up to vote for a strike. The floodgates were open. (6)



At some shops, multilingual teams churned out signs in five languages. Many women slept out on the picket line for the first time. (7)



By the second day, the union was receiving calls from non-union workers asking them to come unionize them. Lea Roback turned up to strike daily, even organizing a flying squad of retirees from the Jewish Old People's Home. (9)





Suspicious of union leadership, the CATV refused formal responsibilities during the strike. Instead, they ran a daycare center in the strike headquarters. This gave them widespread access to the rank-and-file membership. (10)

MY FRIEND JANE RECOUNTED SOMETHING SIMILAR ABOUT HER TIME ORGANIZING NURSES IN NEVADA. SHE SAID, "WE PAID FOR CHILD CARE AT ALL OF OUR MEETINGS—GOOD CHILD CARE. THAT MIGHT SOUND TRIVIAL, BUT NEITHER UNIONS OR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TYPICALLY PROVIDE THIS. WE FOUND THAT IF YOU MAKE CHILD CARE AVAILABLE, MOTHERS WILL TURN OUT IN DROVES." (11)\*



\*It's worth noting that same policies that enabled deindustrialization and deunionization in Europe and North America dovetailed with a transfer of the costs of social reproduction back onto working people, in the form of cuts to social spending. (12) These costs disproportionately boomerang back onto women. It's unsurprising, then, that "countries with robust welfare programs have higher gender parity." (13) The Canadian welfare state began to retreat after the mid-1960s. (14)

The striking “midinettes” attracted a great deal of media attention. (15)\* The scale of the strike and the dispersal of shops posed serious challenges.

\**The Gazette's* coverage was by far the most extensive, perhaps reflecting its cultural and political loyalties (Anglo, business-oriented). Its emphasis was on the losses to the industry and its imminent collapse. Its pieces generally featured a few superficial quotes from strikers and then concluded with a deflationary bit of capitalist realism, leaving the impression that striking garment workers occupied a separate dream world. To its credit, *La Presse* called the strike by its actual name (“The Strike of Pride”) and its quotes were somewhat more substantive. Though it didn't interview any workers, *Le Devoir* drew direct attention to Ottawa's decision to tighten inspection rather than reduce import quotas, returning a sense of institutional agency.



FATIMA: C'ÉTAIT VRAIMENT BIZARRE. QUAND ON LES RENCONTRAIT ET ON ÉTAIT LÀ, C'ÉTAIT "WOW!" ILS VIENNENT NOUS PARLER, ILS SONT INTÉRESSÉS À CE QU'ON DIT, ET NOUS ON OUVRAIT NOTRE SAC. MAIS APRÈS ON ENTENDAIT QU'ON ÉTAIT JUSTE UNE GANG DE FILLES FRUSTRÉES, QUE C'ÉTAIT LES "MIDINETTES." ON VALAIT PAS GRAND CHOSE. C'EST VIEUX, LA DÉFORMATION DES JOURNALISTES. C'ÉTAIT N'IMPORTE QUOI.

ON ÉTAIT COMME DÉPASSÉES. JUSTEMENT, COMME LES JOURNALISTES ET TOUT ÇA NOUS APPLIYAIENT PAS. NOUS ON SE SENTAIT... C'ÉTAIT DUR. C'ÉTAIT BLOC PAR BLOC DANS LA RUE. ON POUVAIT PAS ÊTRE PARTOUT À LA FOIS. SUR LA RUE CHABANEL, IL Y AVAIT ÉNORMÉMENT DE MANUFACTURES. C'ÉTAIT REMPLI DE MANUFACTURES LÀ-DEDANS.

Many women had the support of their partners, who were also on strike.

L'AVANTAGE QU'ON AVAIT, C'ÉTAIT LE SOUTIEN DE NOS CONJOINTS. LES MARIS, LES CONJOINTS QUI ÉTAIENT LÀ—ILS VENAIENT MANIFESTER AVEC NOUS À MIDI. NOS HOMMES, ILS ÉTAIENT AVEC NOUS. MON CONJOINT PASSAIT LES SOIRÉES À FAIRE LE CAFÉ QUAND ON AVAIT NOS PETITES RENCONTRES. IL ALLAIT AVEC MOI À DROITE ET À GAUCHE POUR DISTRIBUER DES TRACTES. LES CONJOINTS NOUS SUIVAIENT. ON ÉTAIT TRÈS APPUYÉS. EUX AUTRES ILS SORTAIENT D'UN SCANDALE DE CONSTRUCTION DE LA FTQ—Ils ÉTAIENT LÀ—DEDANS, ET LÀ C'ÉTAIT LE TEMPS DE SOUTENIR LES FEMMES. C'ÉTAIT VRAIMENT PARTICULIER.



FOR THE FIRST TIME,  
THE CUTTERS ARE WITH  
US. THEY KNOW WE HAVE  
NOTHING MORE TO LOSE.  
(16)



The strike united skilled and semi-skilled workers, despite the gendered pay gap between them. Also taking part were non-union homeworkers, and workers from outside of Quebec. (17)

Trucks full of replacement workers arrived in increasing numbers, anti-scab laws be damned. Picketers did their best to turn them away. (18)



UNE VOITURE ENTRANT DANS LE  
STATIONNEMENT DE LA RUE CHABANEL  
A HEURTÉ DEUX OUVRIÈRES QUI SE  
SONT RETROUVÉES PAR TERRE, L'UNE  
BLESSÉE AU COUDE ET L'AUTRE À LA  
TÊTE ET À LA JAMBE. EXCUSEZ-VOUS  
AU MOINS! POUR TOUTE RÉPONSE, CET  
INDIVIDU A RAMASSÉ UNE BRIQUE PAR  
TERRE ET ME L'A LANCÉE. (19)

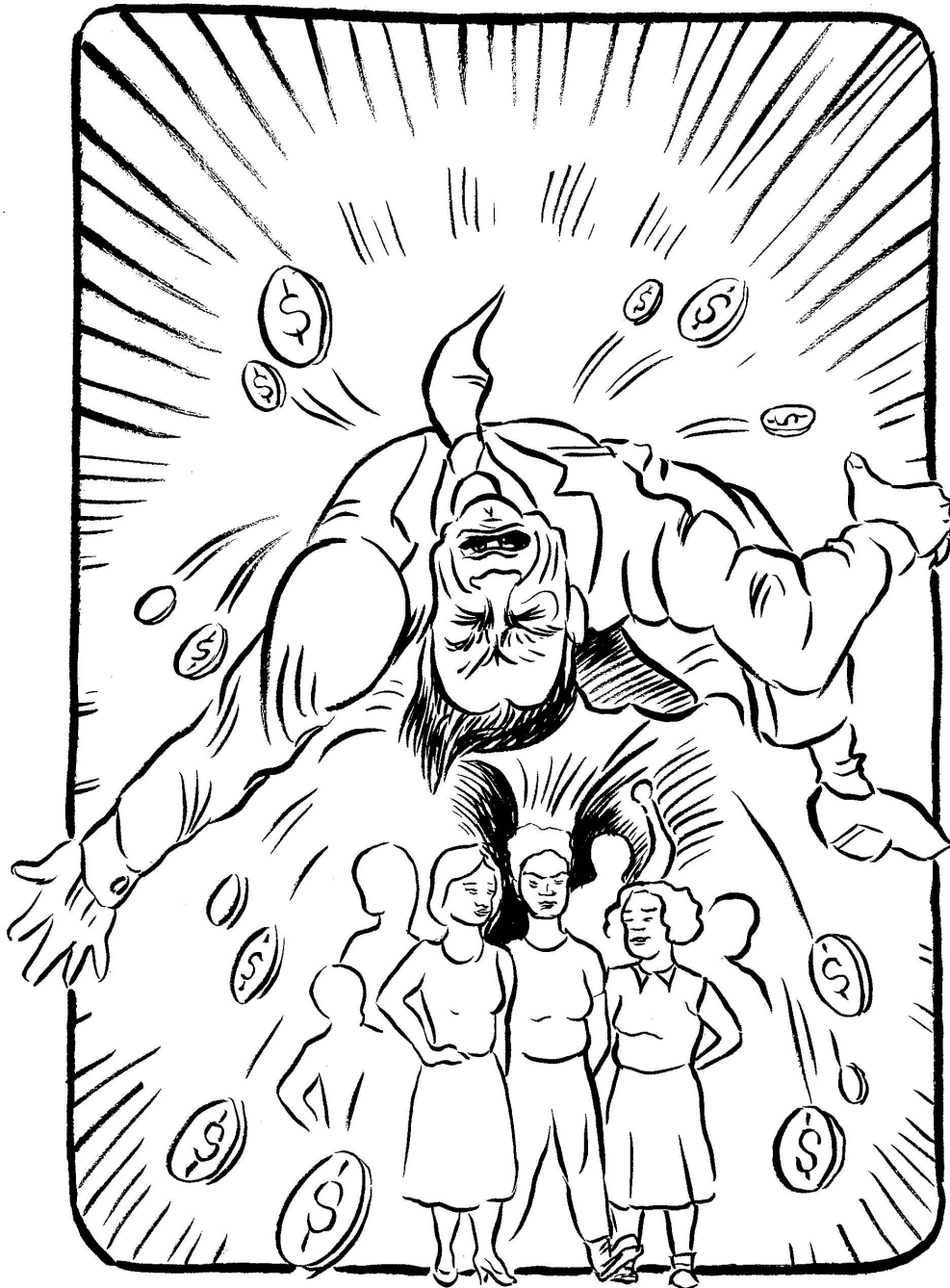
IL Y AVAIT BEAUCOUP DE CASSEURS DE GRÈVE QUI PASSAIENT DANS LES CAMIONS. ILS RENTRAIENT, ILS VENAIENT TRAVAILLER. C'EST MADAME LÉA ROBACK, ON ÉTAIT LÀ À UN MOMENT DONNÉ. ON ÉTAIT DÉCOURAGÉS. ON L'A FAIT VENIR À UN MOMENT DONNÉ, ELLE FAISAIT LE PIQUETAGE AVEC NOUS. ON A DIT: "QU'EST-CE QU'ON FAIT POUR ARRÊTER CES FEMMES-LÀ, CELLES QUI VIENNENT TRAVAILLER DEVANT NOUS, PENDANT QUE NOUS ON EST DANS LA RUE?" ET LÀ ELLE A DIT...



"QUAND ON A FAIT LA GRÈVE QUARANTE ANS PLUS TÔT—PARCE QUE ÇA FAISAIT QUARANTE ANS QU'IL Y AVAIT EU L'AUTRE GRÈVE, QUAND ILS SE SONT SYNDICALISÉS—ON S'EST MIS DEVANT LA PORTE. JE ME SUIS MIS DEVANT LA PORTE, J'AI OUVERT LE CHEMISIER DE MA COLLÈGUE QUI VOULAIT ENTRER." ELLE A DIT, "MAINTENANT TU N'ES PAS ASSEZ DÉCENTE POUR ENTRER TRAVAILLER."

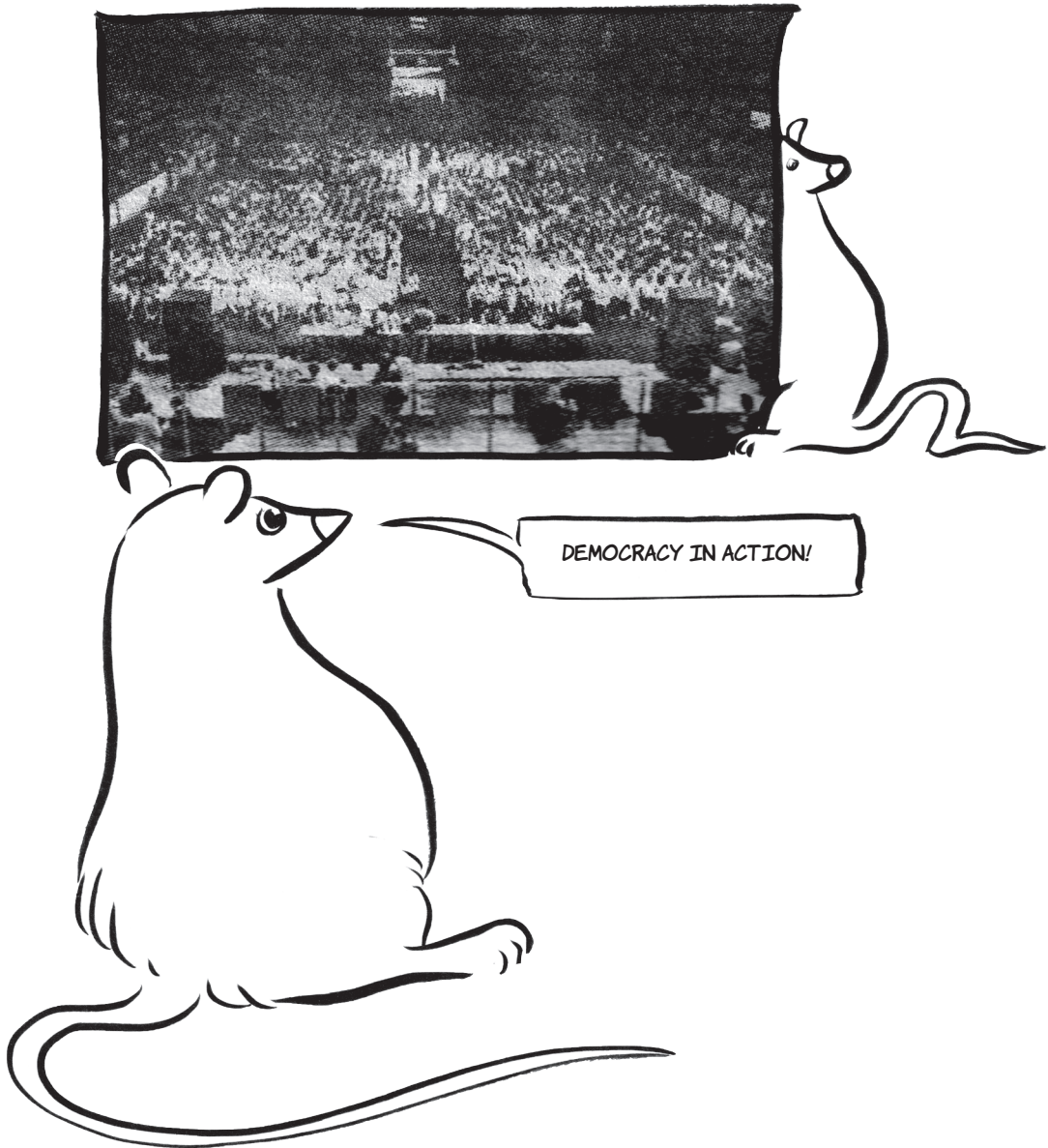


On Friday morning, a group of women attacked Gauthier on his way to work. Thereafter he had a bodyguard. (20)



Union leadership called on its striking membership to accept a tentative contract and end the strike. On August 19th, a vote was held on whether to return to work on Monday. At the Paul Sauve arena, 3500 workers showed up for a show-of-hands vote.

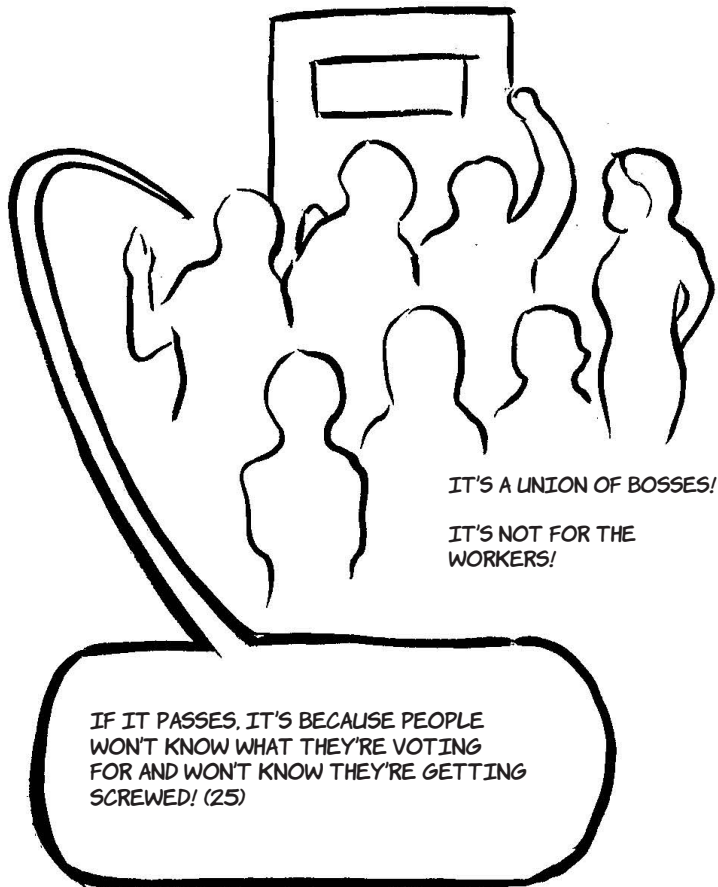
They voted resoundingly to continue the strike. (21)



I CAN'T PRETEND DEMOCRACY REIGNED HERE TODAY... THE MEETING WAS INFILTRATED BY 500 MARXIST-LENINISTS WHO INFLUENCED THE CROWD! MANY DIDN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY WERE VOTING ON. THE VOTE DIDN'T GIVE A TRUE PICTURE OF THE MEMBERS' FEELINGS. (23)



Union leaders decided to ignore the show-of-hands-vote and hold a secret ballot instead. On the day of the secret ballot vote, women blocked Gauthier's office, calling for him to resign. (24)







The contract passed by a slim margin. Many suspected foul play. (32)



ÇA S'EST PASSÉ BIZARREMENT LA FIN DE LA GRÈVE ...



Les 12 000 ouvrières et ouvriers syndiqué(e)s de l'industrie du vêtement pour dames ont fait une grève de 10 jours en août 1977. Tout d'abord pour protester contre la

profiter, qui les a incités à faire accepter l'entente de principe: prolongation de la convention collective de 11 mois, si l'Union le désire; période de la 4<sup>ème</sup> semaine de vacances déterminée par entente mutuelle; chaque

LA GREVE  
DES MIDINETTES

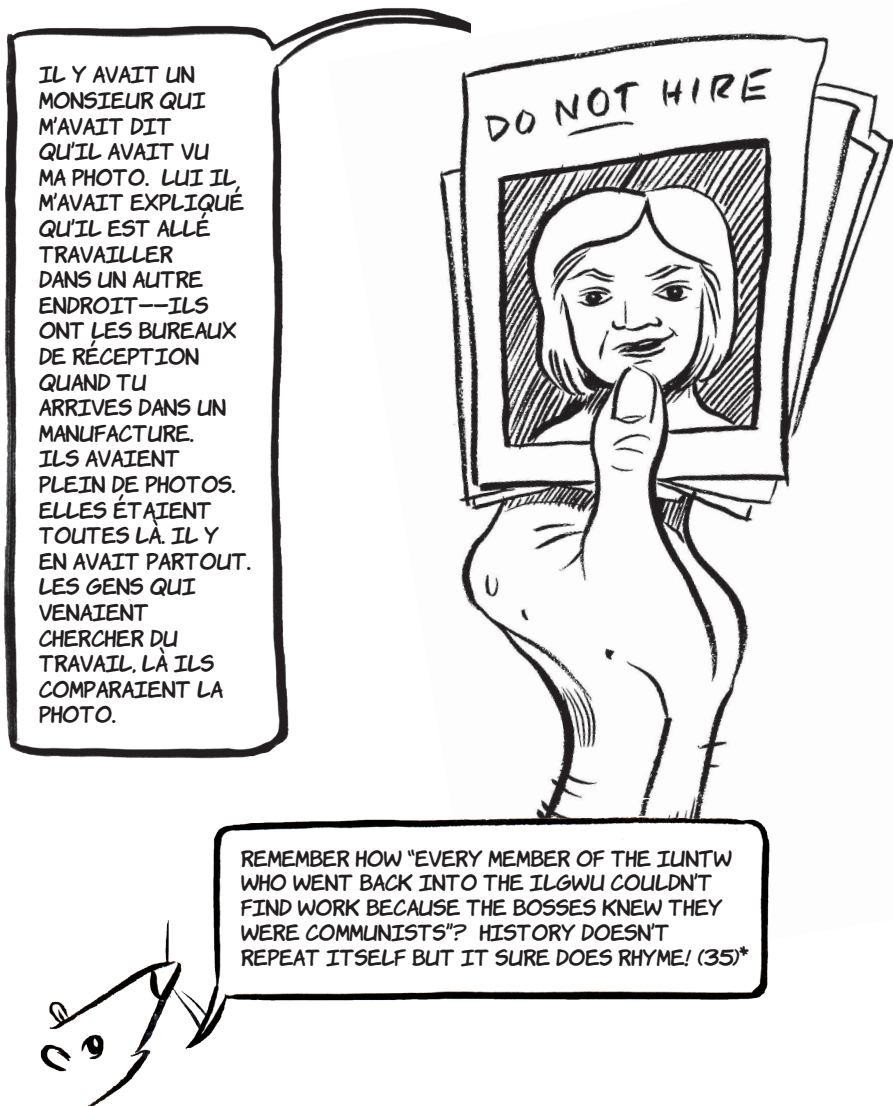
Falaise  
Rochia

**Trahison des  
boss syndicaux  
malgré  
la rébellion  
des ouvrières  
contre eux**

Les  
revendications

Lors de la grève des Midinettes, les couturières se battaient principalement pour

CATV members and more militant strikers were fired because no "protocol de retour" had been signed to protect them. (34)



\*Following IUNTW's defeat in 1934, Bernard Shane reported that "over 1,000 Jewish girls have been completely excluded from the trade and the chances are that they shall never be able to come back since the employers blame them for all their troubles." (36) According to Steedman, "many of the blacklisted Jewish women wore crosses around their necks when they went back into the Montreal shops to look for work." (37)

QUAND ON FERME, TOUT LE SAVOIR-FAIRE EST FINI, IL Y EN A PLUS. C'EST TROP TARD DE RELEVER MAINTENANT L'INDUSTRIE DU VÊTEMENT. IL Y EN AURA PLUS D'INDUSTRIE COMME C'ÉTAIT, MAINTENANT. C'EST DES PETITES COMPAGNIES QUE LES GENS, ILS OUVRONT. JE SUIS FIÈRE DE ÇA, QUE LES GENS... LES PETITES COMPAGNIES QUI SE FONT. LES GENS S'ORGANISENT. MOI JE DONNE DES COURS.

MOI, EN TOUT CAS, J'AI MILITÉ BEAUCOUP DANS D'AUTRES CHOSES. DEPUIS CE TEMPS-LÀ. ICI ON A MANIFESTÉ CONTRE LES PIPELINES. LES HOMMES ET LES FEMMES ÉTAIENT ENSEMBLE. QUAND ON A FAIT LES MANIFESTATIONS (GRÈVE ÉTUDIANTE QUÉBÉCOISE DE 2012), ON PARTAIT À MONTRÉAL. LES FAMILLES ELLES PARTAIENT TOUTES MANIFESTER. QUAND IL ARRIVE UN MOMENT QUE LES GENS EN ONT PAR-DESSUS LE "PONPON"...







MOI, JE NE SUIS PAS ACHETABLE. JE LEUR AI DIT, JE NE SUIS PAS À VENDRE, IL N'Y A RIEN À FAIRE. JE NE SUIS PAS RICHE, MAIS J'AI MON PETIT JARDIN, JE ME SENS TELLEMENT RICHE. JE FAIS MES AFFAIRES, JE FAIS MES PETITES COUVERTES DE LAINE. ÇA C'EST LA LAINE DE MES MOUTONS...





## NOTES

- (1) McAlevey, *Raising Expectations*, 317.
- (2) Ruth Wilson Gilmore quoted in “Geographies of Racial Capitalism with Ruth Wilson Gilmore,” *Antipode Foundation*, June 1, 2020.
- (3) This and bottom text adapted from Robinson and Bryan, “Union tables new proposal in garment strike talks.”
- (4) Quoted in *ibid.*
- (5) Paraphrased in *ibid.*
- (6) Adapted from Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 63. I couldn’t resist borrowing her “floodgates” idiom.
- (7) Adapted from *ibid.*
- (8) Marie Toutant quoted in Carole Thibaut, “Les midinettes affirment leur fierté,” *La Presse*, August 16, 1983, A-2. Drawing based on a photograph in “Les midinettes rejettent l’accord de principe.”
- (9) Adapted from Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 64.
- (10) Adapted from *ibid.*, 65.
- (11) McAlevey, *Raising Expectations*, 59.
- (12) Salar Mohandesi and Emma Teitelman, “Without Reserves,” in *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression*, ed. Tithi Bhattacharya (London: Pluto Press, 2017): 63.
- (13) Gus Wezerek and Kristen Ghodsee, “Women’s Unpaid Labor is Worth \$10,900,000,000,000,” *The New York Times*, March 5, 2020.
- (14) Ernie Lightman and Allan Irving, “Restructuring Canada’s Welfare State,” *Journal of Social Policy* 20, no. 1 (1991): 65-156.
- (15) In addition to the newspaper coverage, Fatima and other CATV organizers appeared on a TV program.
- (16) Anonymous striker quoted in Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 65.
- (17) Gleaned from Fatima Rocchia (transcript).
- (18) Illegal scabbing and related truck incidents are recurring themes in the French newspaper accounts. The QFL was eventually hired to investigate this.
- (19) Mariette Greco, quoted in Thibaut, “Les midinettes affirment leur fierté.” Drawing based on photograph in *ibid.*
- (20) Adapted from Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 64.
- (21) Adapted from Jennifer Robinson, “Garment strikers berate leader before today’s settlement vote,” *The Gazette*, August 20, 1983, A-1 and Robinson, “Garment workers to vote in secret ballot.” The vote count is from Lipsig-Mummé, “Organizing Women,” 64.
- (22) (Page 116) Photograph reproduced from “La greve des midinettes,” *La Révolution prolétarienne*, date unknown, 2 (from Fatima’s personal papers).
- (23) English quote: Gilles Gauthier paraphrased in Robinson, “Garment workers to vote in secret ballot.” Drawing is a composite of a description in *ibid.* (“... Hundreds of strikers cheered wildly Saturday when one man burned a copy of the agreement and hordes of women shouting ‘We won, we won,’ danced in the aisles...”) and a film still from CBC’s “Quebec garment workers’ first strike.”

- (24) Adapted from Robinson, "Protestors block office."
- (25) This and previous: striker Lise Rochon quoted in *ibid.*
- (26) "The mandate is clear. Everyone must go back to work.": Gerald Roy, Québec ILGWU vice-president, quoted in Robinson, "Garment contract passes by slim margin."  
"We have lost nothing.": Gilles Gauthier quoted in *ibid.*
- (27) First quote: John Goedtke quoted in *ibid.* Second quote: Adele Beaudry quoted in Jennifer Robinson, "Union OKs deal to end garment strike Monday," *The Gazette*, August 19, 1983, A-1.
- (28) Anonymous man responding to Gilles Gauthier, quoted in *ibid.*
- (29) Chant quoted in Roy, "Les grévistes du vêtement tonnent contre leur chef."
- (30) Anonymous striker quoted in Robinson, "Garment workers to vote in secret ballot."
- (31) Chants and shouts quoted in Robinson, "Garment contract passes by slim margin."
- (32) Adapted from Jennifer Robinson, "Garment contract passes by slim margin," *The Gazette*, August 24, 1983, A-1.
- (33) (Page 120) Photographs reproduced from "La greve des midinettes," 2, 4.
- (34) Adapted from Lipsig-Mummé, "Organizing Women," 64.
- (35) Joshua Gershman quoted in Steedman, "The Promise," 68.
- (36) Steedman, "The Promise," 66.
- (37) Steedman, "The Promise," 67.

~

## ***LOOSE ENDS***

*Among all the discussions of plant closures and relocations, it is worth noting that there are more industrial workers in the world today than there ever were before—they are now just of different colors, speak different languages, and are in different locations than labor historians have come to expect. If we bracket for a moment the brutality of job losses to specific individuals and communities, the relocation of jobs and investment constitutes not “a reduction in the overall social power of the world proletariat” but merely “a transfer of social power from one segment of the world proletariat to another segment.”*

— Jefferson Cowie (with Giovanni Arrighi) (1)







OOH, WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE?



## GM Strikers Are Waging a Battle on Two Fronts

BY

JANE SLAUGHTER / CHRIS BROOKS

Almost 50,000 UAW workers are on strike against GM and a two-tier labor system that undermines worker solidarity. But members may need to wage a battle on two fronts — against the company, but also against their own union leadership.

Forty-nine thousand auto workers are on strike at General Motors in the largest private sector strike since the last time union and company clashed, in 2007.

Production has stopped at fifty-five factories and parts centers. According to various analysts, the strike could cost GM \$50 million to \$100 million per day in profits. Before the strike, the company was expected to make \$3.5 billion in this quarter alone.

Walking out was “scary and uplifting at the same time,” said Shawn Edwards, a worker at GM’s Detroit-Hamtramck assembly plant with three years’ seniority. “It’s scary because we have lives to maintain and we don’t know how long we’ll be out. We don’t want it to be too long but we do need to make a statement.

“It’s uplifting because we’re making a stand,” she said. “We’re not accepting concessions from a company posting billions of dollars of profit. And because we’re all together. There’s safety in numbers. We’re standing up for ourselves in solidarity.”

Strikers are hoping to make up ground lost since the United Auto Workers (UAW) agreed to two-tier wages in 2007, followed by the Great Recession and the auto bailout, when GM got \$50 billion from the taxpayers and even more concessions.

The company has since rebounded, making \$35 billion in profits over the past three years. GM paid no federal income taxes last year and gifted CEO Mary Barra \$22 million.

Yet union workers, whose contracts were once the lodestar of the private sector, continue to fall behind as GM fills its factories with low-paid temps, contractors, and a subsidiary called GM Subsystems — all doing work once performed by regular GM employees. As one indication of the slippage in union numbers and power, when the UAW struck GM for two days in 2007, the workforce was half again as big, at 74,000, as it is today.

Not satisfied, GM is demanding more concessions from its overworked employees, a sign that the company sees the UAW as an easy foe, especially given the highly publicized corruption scandal that has rocked its top leadership.

## ***NOTES***

(1) Cowie, *Capital Moves*, 199.

(2) Jane Slaughter and Chris Brooks, “GM Strikers Are Waging a Battle on Two Fronts,” *Jacobin*, September 9, 2019. Reproduced with permission.

# ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS***

Several happy coincidences and many helping hands conspired to make this book possible. We are endlessly grateful to Fatima for sharing the story that inspired it, and for trusting us to project it back into the world. Though we never got to meet them, we'd like to thank Glen and Randy for their stories, so rich in contextual detail, and Lauren for drawing them out. Added thanks to Lauren for descending on me as a research buddy when I needed one most. Lauren swooped in to help me make sense of Fatima's papers and translated many of them into English. Eternal thanks to accidental interpreter Andrew, the most sporting person I know. Thanks to Jonny for transcribing and translating Fatima's interview, and to Joel for reviewing it. My supervisor Ted was a cool reservoir of guidance and reassurance through all this. A warm, fuzzy thanks to him for listening so well and nudging me in the right direction. Thanks as well to Steven for sparking my interest in this topic with his wonderful class on deindustrialization, and to Jonah for all the emotional support and graphic novel expertise.

— **LEONA**

As we look back on this history, we also look forward to more abundant, diverse, and compassionate relationships with work, with living, and with place. We find ourselves holding huge gratefulness for the land upon which we are growing and researching. We would like to share our thanks to this place, Tiohtià:ke and/or Montreal, and to the multitudes of people and lifeforms who nurture it with respect. Uncovering the small but mighty history contained in this book heightened our appreciation of the many beautiful histories that have been subjected to near-erasure. We wish for these too to be woven back into our knowing. Sending out and writing in deep, deep gratitude for the peoples of these unceded and occupied lands, who are, among others, of the Kanien'kehà:ka Nation. Thank you.

— **LOLO**

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

*De fil en aiguille*. Montreal: Ligue des femmes du Québec, year unknown. Fatima's personal papers, Saint-Joseph-du-Lac.

"Garment industry hit by first walkout." *The Gazette*, August 15, 1983, A-1. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830815&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

"Quebec garment workers' first strike in four decades." *CBC Digital Archives*, 1983. <http://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/garment-workers-first-strike-in-four-decades>.

"Grève générale illimitée de ouvriers québécoise du vêtement pour dame." *Le Devoir*, August 15, 1983, 3. <http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2787028?docsearchtext=15%20ao%C3%BBt%201983>.

"Guide to the ILGWU. Montreal Dress Joint Board minutes." Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University. <http://rmc.library.cornell.edu/EAD/htmldocs/KCLo5780-029.html#doi175>.

"La greve des midinettes." *La Révolution prolétarienne*, date unknown. Fatima's personal papers, Saint-Joseph-du-Lac.

"*Les femmes cousent, le syndicat empoche*." *Chatelaine*, September 1981. Reproduced in *Dossier noir sur l'UIOVD*. CATV, Montreal, 1981. Fatima's personal papers, Saint-Joseph-du-Lac.

"Les midinettes rejettent l'accord de principe." *Le Devoir*, August 16, 1983, 2. <http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2787030?docsearchtext=16%20ao%C3%BBt%201983>.

"The garment industry: working at night." *CBC Digital Archives*, 1984. <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1785262272>.

Arnopoulos, Sheila McLeod. *Problems of Immigrant Women in the Canadian Labour Force*. Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1979.

Barker, Adam, Toby Rollo, and Emma Battell Lowman. "Settler Colonialism and the Consolidation of Canada in the Twentieth Century." In *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, edited by Edward Cavanagh and Lorenzo Veracini, 153-168. London: Routledge, 2016.

Béliveau, Jules. "Les dirigeants de l'UIOVD acceptent une entente de principe." *La Presse*, August 19, 1983, A-2. <http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2290123?docsearchtext=la%20opresse%2019%20ao%C3%BBt%201983>.

*Between the Lines: Listening to Female Factory Workers in China*. Business for Social Responsibility (BSR), March, 2013, [https://www.bsr.org/reports/bsr\\_female\\_factory\\_workers\\_china\\_en.pdf](https://www.bsr.org/reports/bsr_female_factory_workers_china_en.pdf).

Bhattacharya, Tithi. "Introduction: Mapping Social Reproduction Theory." In *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression*, edited by Tithi Bhattacharya, 1-20. London: Pluto Press, 2017.

Brooks, Chris. "Democratizing the UAW: An Interview with Justin Mayhugh." *Jacobin*, December 23, 2019. <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2019/12/united-automobile-workers-uaw-general-motors>.

Burrill, Fred. "Thesis Proposal: Heritages of Struggle and Dispossession in Saint-Henri, 1970-2018." PhD diss. proposal, Concordia University, 2018.

Clark, Andy. "‘Stealing Our Identity and Taking It over to Ireland:’ Deindustrialization, Resistance, and Gender in Scotland." In *The Deindustrialized World: Confronting Ruination in Post Industrial Places*, edited by Steven High, Lachlan MacKinnon, and Andrew Perchard, 331-347. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017.

Clarke, Jackie. "Closing Moulinex: Thoughts on the Visibility and Invisibility of Industrial Labour in Contemporary France." *Modern & Contemporary France* 19, no. 4 (2011): 443-458. doi: 10.1080/09639489.2011.610164.

Clarke, Jackie. "Closing Time: Deindustrialization and Nostalgia in Contemporary France." *History Workshop Journal* 79 (Spring 2015): 107-125. doi: 10.1093/hwj/dbu041.

Copp, Terry. "The Rise of Industrial Unions in Montréal 1935-1945." *Relations industrielles* 37, no. 4 (1982): 843-875. doi: 10.7202/029304ar.

Cowie, Jefferson. *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999.*

Delean, Paul. "‘Good employer’ squeezed by garment walkout." *The Gazette*, August 19, 1983, A-3. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830819&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

DeWolf, Christopher. "New life for a garment district." *Urban Photo*, July 4, 2008. <http://www.urbanphoto.net/blog/2008/07/04/new-life-for-a-garment-district> (article originally published in the July 3rd edition of the Montreal Mirror).

*Dossier noir sur l'UIOVD*. Montreal: CATV, 1981. Fatima's personal papers, Saint-Joseph-du-Lac.

Fatima Rocchia's personal papers. Saint-Joseph-du-Lac. Loaned to me on May 26, 2019.

Greider, William. *One World, Ready or Not: The Manic Logic of Global Capitalism*. New York: Simon & Shuster, 1997.

*Guide pour la mise sur pied d'un comite de condition feminine*. Montreal: Syndicat canadien de la fonction publique (SCFP), year unknown. Fatima's personal papers, Saint-Joseph-du-Lac.

High, Steven, Lachlan MacKinnon, and Andrew Perchard. "Introduction." In *The Deindustrialized World: Confronting Ruination in Post Industrial Places*, edited by Steven High, Lachlan MacKinnon, and Andrew Perchard, 3-22. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017.

High, Steven. "‘The Wounds of Class’: A Historiographical Reflection on the Study of Deindustrialization, 1973-2013." *History Compass* 11, no. 11 (2013): 994-1007. doi: 10.1111/hic3.12099.

High, Steven. "Beyond Aesthetics: Visibility and Invisibility in the Aftermath of Deindustrialization." *International Labor and Working Class History* 84 (Fall 2013): 140-153. doi:10.1017/S0147547913000276.

Johnson, Laura Climenko. *The Seam Allowance: Industrial Home Sewing in Canada*. Toronto: Women's Educational Press, 1982.

Laughlin, Ann. "We had no alternative, striker says." *The Gazette*, August 16, 1983, A-1. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830816&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

*Les travailleuses et l'accès à la syndicalisation: États généraux II des travailleuses salariées québécoises*. Montreal: Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN), year unknown. Fatima's personal papers, Saint-Joseph-du-Lac.

Lightman, Ernie, and Allan Irving. "Restructuring Canada's Welfare State." *Journal of Social Policy* 20, no. 1 (1991): 65-156. doi: 10.1017/S0047279400018481.



Lipsig-Mummé, Carla. "Organizing Women in the Clothing Trades: Homework and the 1983 Garment Strike in Canada." *Studies in Political Economy* 22 (Spring 1987): 41-71. doi: 10.1080/19187033.1987.11675573.

Massey, Doreen. *Spatial Divisions of Labour: Social Structures and the Geography of Production*. London: Macmillan, 1984.

McAlevy, Jane. *Raising Expectations (and Raising Hell): My Decade Fighting for the Labor Movement*. London: Verso, 2012.

McIntosh, Robert. "Sweated Labour: Female Needleworkers in Industrializing Canada." *Labour / Le Travail* 32 (Fall 1993): 105-138. doi: 10.2307/25143728.

Merrifield, Andy. *Henri Lefebvre: A Critical Introduction*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Mohandesi, Salar, and Emma Teitelman. "Without Reserves." In *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentring Oppression*, edited by Tithi Bhattacharya, 37-67. London: Pluto Press, 2017.

Perchard, Andrew. "A Little Local Difficulty? Deindustrialization and Glocalization in a Scottish Town." In *The Deindustrialized World: Confronting Ruination in Post Industrial Places*, edited by Steven High, Lachlan MacKinnon, and Andrew Perchard, 284-312. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017.

Phillips, Jim. "The Moral Economy of Deindustrialization in Post-1945 Scotland." In *The Deindustrialized World: Confronting Ruination in Post Industrial Places*, edited by Steven High, Lachlan MacKinnon, and Andrew Perchard, 313-330. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017.

Podmore, Julie. "St. Lawrence Blvd. as 'Third City': Place, gender and difference along Montréal's 'Main.'" PhD diss., McGill University, 1999.

Pollert, Anna. *Girls, Wives, Factory Lives*. London: Macmillan, 1981.

Robinson, Jennifer, and Jay Bryan. "Union tables new proposal in garment strike talks." *The Gazette*, August 17, 1983, A-1. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830817&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

Robinson, Jennifer, and Ingrid Peritz. "Garment employees are back on the job." *The Gazette*, August 25, 1983, A-1. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830825&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

Robinson, Jennifer. "Garment contract passes by slim margin." *The Gazette*, August 24, 1983, A-1. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830824&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

Robinson, Jennifer. "Garment firms ease demands on strikers." *The Gazette*, August 18, 1983, A-1. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830818&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

Robinson, Jennifer. "Garment strikers berate leader before today's settlement vote." *The Gazette*, August 20, 1983, A-1. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830820&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

Robinson, Jennifer. "Garment workers to vote in secret ballot." *The Gazette*, August 22, 1983, A-1. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830822&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

Robinson, Jennifer. "Ladies' garment union rejects offer and workers go back to picket line." *The Gazette*, August 16, 1983, A-1. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830816&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

Robinson, Jennifer. "Protestors block office of garment union chief." *The Gazette*, August 23, 1983, A-1. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830823&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

Robinson, Jennifer. "Union OKs deal to end garment strike Monday." *The Gazette*, August 19, 1983, A-1. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830819&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

Rocchia, Fatima. Interview by Leona Siaw. Saint-Joseph-du-Lac, November 5, 2017. Audio & partial transcript.

Rotchin, Glen. Interview by Lauren Laframboise. Montreal, November 4, 2018. Audio & transcript.

Rotchin, Randy. Interview by Lauren Laframboise. Montreal, November 2, 2018. Audio & chronology.

Roy, Paul. "Midinettes : Un nouveau scrutin (secret) demain." *La Presse*, August 22, 1983, A-1. <http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2290145?docsearchtext=la%20opresse%2022%20ao%C3%BBt%201983>.

Roy, Paul. "Les grévistes du vêtement tonnent contre leur chef." *La Presse*, August 20, 1983, A-1. <http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2290127?docsearchtext=la%20opresse%2020%20ao%C3%BBt%201983>.

Roy, Paul. "Première grève des midinettes en 43 ans." *La Presse*, August 15, 1983, A-1. <http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2290100?docsearchtext=la%20opresse%2015%20ao%C3%BBt%201983>.

Semenak, Susan. "Makers of men's and boys' clothing hamstrung as women's garment strikers block shipments." *The Gazette*, August 19, 1983, A-3. <https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=Fr8DH2VBP9sC&dat=19830819&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.

Shane, Bernard. "Great Moments." *Les / The Midinettes: 1937/1962*, edited by Edward Bantey, 109-23. Montreal: Montreal Joint Board, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, 1962.

Slater, Tom. "Missing Marcuse: On gentrification and displacement." *City* 13, no. 2 (2009): 292-311. doi: 10.1080/13604810902982250.

Slaughter, Jane, and Chris Brooks. "GM Strikers Are Waging a Battle on Two Fronts." *Jacobin*, September 9, 2019. <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2019/09/general-motors-united-auto-workers-strike>.

Smith, Stephen. "Ubisoft at 20: It's changed Mile End, but for the better?" *CBC News*, June 2, 2017. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/ubisoft-20-years-montreal-mile-end-2017-1.4143407>.

Soja, Edward. "The Socio-Spatial Dialectic." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 70, no. 2 (Jun 1980): 207-225. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8306.1980.tb01308.x>.

Steedman, Mercedes. "The Promise: Communist Organizing in the Needle Trades, the Dressmakers' Campaign, 1928-1937." *Labour/Le Travail* 34 (Fall 1994): 37-73. <http://www.iltjournal.ca/index.php/ilt/article/view/4937/5810>.

Steedman, Mercedes. *Angels of the Workplace: Women and the Construction of Gender Relations in the Canadian Clothing Industry, 1890-1940*. 1997. Reprint, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.

Strangleman, Tim. "Deindustrialisation and the Historical Sociological Imagination: Making Sense of Work and Industrial Change." *Sociology* 51, no. 2 (2016): 466-482. doi: 10.1177/0038038515622906.

Supiot, Alain. *Homo Juridicus: On the Anthropological Function of the Law*. London: Verso, 2007.

Tardif, André. “Les « midinettes » reprendront le vote sur l'accord mais cette fois par scrutin secret.” *Le Devoir*, August 22, 1983, 3. <http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2787042?docsearchtext=22%20ao%C3%BBt%201983>.

Tardif, Germain. “Midinettes : l'UIOVD a réduit ses demandes salariales en soirée.” *La Presse*, August 17, 1983, A-5. <http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2290108?docsearchtext=la%20presse%2017%20ao%C3%BBt%201983>.

Thibaudeau, Carole. “Les midinettes affirment leur fierté.” *La Presse*, August 16, 1983, A-2. <http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/2290104?docsearchtext=la%20presse%2016%20ao%C3%BBt%201983>.

*Vie Ouvrière* 31, no. 151 (Jan-Feb 1981). Fatima's personal papers, Saint-Joseph-du-Lac.

*Vie Ouvrière* 31, no. 151 (Jan-Feb 1981). Fatima's personal papers, Saint-Joseph-du-Lac.

*Vie Ouvrière* 32, no. 160 (Mar 1982). Fatima's personal papers, Saint-Joseph-du-Lac.

Wezerek, Gus, and Kristen Ghodsee. “Women's Unpaid Labor is Worth \$10,900,000,000,000.” *The New York Times*, March 5, 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/03/04/opinion/women-unpaid-labor.html>.

Yanz, Lynda, Bob Jeffcott, Deena Ladd, and Joan Atlin. *Policy Options to Improve Standards for Women Garment Workers in Canada and Internationally*. Ottawa: Status of Women Canada, 1999. <http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/SW21-35-1999-1E.pdf>.

Zukin, Sharon. *Naked City*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.



